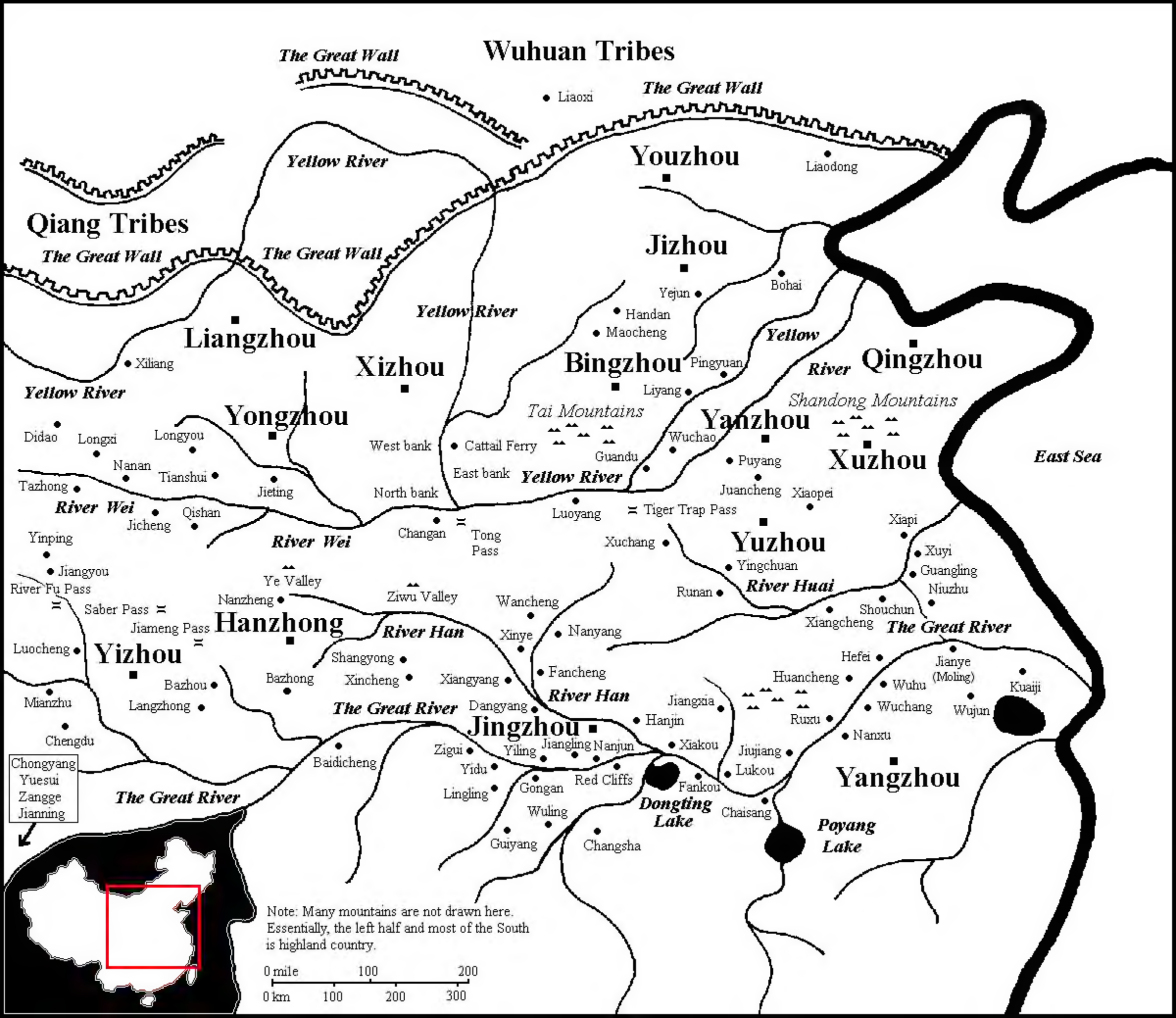

Wuhuan Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Liaoxi
Youzhou
Liaodong
Yellow River
Qiang Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Jizhou
Bohai
Yejun
Handan
Maocheng
Yellow River
Liangzhou
Xizhou
Bingzhou
Pingyuan
Yellow River
Qingzhou
Xiliang
Yellow River
Liyang
Shandong Mountains
Tai Mountains
Yongzhou
Yanzhou
Didao
Longxi
Longyou
West bank
Cattail Ferry
Wuchao
Guandu
Xuzhou
East Sea
Nanan
East bank
Yellow River
Puyang
Tianshui
Tazhong
Jieting
North bank
Juancheng
Xiaopei
River Wei
Qishan
Luoyang
Tiger Trap Pass
Jicheng
Changan
Tong Pass
Xiapi
Yuzhou
Yinping
River Wei
Xuchang
Xuyi
Jiangyou
Ye Valley
Yingchuan
Guangling
River Fu Pass
Ziwu Valley
Runan
River Huai
Niuzhu
Saber Pass
Nanzheng
Wancheng
Shouchun
Jiameng Pass
Hanzhong
River Han
Xinye
Nanyang
Xiangcheng
The Great River
Luocheng
Yizhou
Shangyong
Hefei
Jianye (Moling)
Fancheng
Huancheng
Bazhou
Bazhong
Xincheng
Xiangyang
Wuhu
Kuaiji
River Han
Jiangxia
Mianzhu
Langzhong
The Great River
Dangyang
Wuchang
Wujun
Ruxu
Hanjin
Jingzhou
Chengdu
Nanxu
Zigui
Yiling
Jiangling
Nanjun
Xiakou
Jiujiang
Baidicheng
Yidu
Lukou
Yangzhou
Chongyang
Yuesui
Zangge
Jianning
Red Cliffs
Fankou
Gongan
Lingling
Dongting Lake
Chaisang
Wuling
Poyang Lake
Guiyang
Changsha
The Great River
Note: Many mountains are not drawn here.
Essentially, the left half and most of the South
is highland country.
0 mile 100 200
0 km 100 200 300

三国志 ⑬

玄徳の危機

横山光輝

希望コミックス 50

CHARACTERS OF SANGOKUSHI
PART 1: CHARACTERS TO KEEP IN MIND

CAO CAO MENGDE:

THE AMBITIOUS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERO OF SANGOKUSHI. AFTER RESCUING THE EMPEROR FROM LI JUE AND GUO SI, HE IS CURRENTLY THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN AND HAS CONTROL OVER THE IMPERIAL COURT.

CHEN DENG:

THE SON OF CHEN GUI AND FORMERLY THE SUBORDINATE TO TAO QIAN OF XUZHOU. EVER SINCE LU BU HAS TAKEN CONTROL OF XUZHOU, HE HAS SERVED LU BU BUT IN NAME ONLY. UNDER CAO CAO'S ORDERS, HE IS CURRENTLY PLOTTING LU BU'S DOWNFALL WITH HIS FATHER.

CHEN GUI:

FATHER OF CHEN DENG WHO HAS SWORN FALSE ALLEGIANCE TO LU BU. HE IS CURRENTLY PLOTTING LU BU'S DOWNFALL WITH HIS SON .

CONSORT HE:

HE JIN'S YOUNGER SISTER. ORIGINALLY A PEASANT, HER BEAUTY WAS NOTICED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS WHO THEN PRESENTED HER TO EMPEROR LING. SHE BECAME EMPEROR LING'S FAVOURITE CONSORT AND GAVE BIRTH TO PRINCE LIU BIAN. SHE AND HER SON WERE REMOVED FROM POWER BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED BY LI RU.

DIAN WEI:

CAO CAO'S FIERCE GENERAL RENOWNED FOR HIS STRENGTH. HE IS COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS "E LAI," A MIGHTY GENERAL WHO SERVED UNDER KING ZHOU. HE WAS KILLED IN VOLUME 12 DURING ZHANG XIU'S PLOT TO KILL CAO CAO AT WANCHENG.

DIAO CHAN:

A SLAVE GIRL BELONGING TO WANG YUN, BUT HE RAISED THE GIRL MORE OF AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER. IN VOLUME 7, SHE AND WANG YUN PLOTTED TO DISTANCE LU BU FROM DONG ZHUO. SHE KILLED HERSELF AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER GOAL IN VOLUME 8.

DONG CHENG:

A TRUSTED RETAINER OF EMPEROR XIAN. IN VOLUME 9, HE HELPS THE EMPEROR ESCAPE FROM LI JUE AND GUO SI.

DONG ZHUO:

GOVERNOR OF LIANGZHOU WHO LATER SEIZES CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND SEATS HIMSELF AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN. HE IS DEPICTED AS SADISTIC, CORRUPT, AND RUTHLESS TYRANT. HE WAS KILLED BY HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, LU BU.

GONGSUN ZAN:

GOVERNOR OF BEIPING WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO. HE WAGED WAR AGAINST YUAN SHAO AFTER THE LATTER TRICKED HIM AND KILLED HIS YOUNGER BROTHER BUT HAS SINCE MADE PEACE WITH YUAN SHAO.

GUAN YU YUNCHANG:

SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER TO LIU BEI AND SWORN OLDER BROTHER TO ZHANG FEI. HE IS AS FIERCE AS GUAN YU BUT IS MORE RESTRAINED AND CALM IN HIS MANNERISMS.

HE JIN:

OLDER BROTHER OF CONSORT HE. ORIGINALLY A SIMPLE BUTCHER, HE BECAME A GENERAL WHEN HIS YOUNGER SISTER BECAME EMPEROR LING'S CONSORT. HE ATTEMPTS TO THE TEN ATTENDANTS BUT IS DISSUADED BY HIS YOUNGER SISTER. HE IS LATER ASSASSINATED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

JIA XU:

THE CUNNING STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO ZHANG XIU. IN VOLUME 12, HE AND ZHANG XIU PLOTTED A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CAO CAO.

LIU BEI XUANDE:

THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF SANGOKUSHI. HE IS A KIND AND VIRTUOUS MAN SAID TO BE THE DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR JING OF HAN. HE HAS SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI. AS OF VOLUME 12, HE IS THE GOVERNOR OF XIAOPEI AND WORKING SECRETLY WITH THE CHEN FAMILY TO BRING DOWN LU BU.

LIU BIAO:

THE GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU WHO, ALONG WITH YUAN SHAO, TRIED TO KILL SUN JIAN TO RECOVER THE STOLEN IMPERIAL SEAL. HE SUCCESSFULLY THWARTED SUN JIAN'S ATTEMPTS TO TAKE JINGZHOU. HAS CURRENTLY JOINED HANDS WITH ZHANG XIU.

LU BU:

HE IS SAID TO BE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR IN THE LAND WHO RIDES ON THE FASTEST HORSE IN THE LAND, THE RED HARE. HE IS CURRENTLY THE GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU.

SUN JIAN:

BORN IN WU COMMANDERY AND WAS THE GOVERNOR OF CHANGSHA. HE PARTICIPATED IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO IN VOLUME 5. WHEN HE FOUND THE IMPERIAL SEAL, HIS ALLIES YUAN SHAO AND LIU BIAO ATTEMPTED TO KILL HIM TO RETRIEVE THE SEAL. IN VOLUME 7, HE TRIED TO EXACT HIS REVENGE BY ATTACKING LIU BIAO BUT WAS KILLED IN BATTLE.

SUN CE:

ELDEST SON OF SUN JIAN. AFTER LENDING YUAN SHU THE IMPERIAL SEAL TO BORROW AN ARMY, HE SUCCESSFULLY CONQUERED THE SOUTHEASTERN REGIONS OF JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG.

SUN QUAN:

YOUNGER BROTHER OF SUN CE.

TAISHI CI:

SUN CE'S TRUSTED GENERAL, FORMERLY LIU YAO'S SUBORDINATE BUT LATER SWITCHED SIDES TO BECOME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE AFTER HE WAS CAPTURED.

TEN ATTENDANTS:

A CORRUPT GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHO WERE THE HIGHEST RANKING MINISTERS OF THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY SUCCEEDED IN ASSASSINATING GENERAL HE JIN BUT WERE LATER KILLED BY HE JIN'S ARMY LED BY YUAN SHAO.

WANG YUN:

AN OLD MAN WHO HOLDS THE POST OF MINISTER OF THE MASSES, ONE OF THE 3 HIGHEST RANKING POSTS IN HAN. HE SUCCESSFULLY PLOTS DONG ZHUO'S DOWNFALL. HE IS LATER KILLED BY REMNANTS OF DONG ZHUO'S ARMY WHO INVADE CHANG'AN (UNSHOWN IN MANGA)

WEN CHOU:

HE AND YAN LIANG ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS.

YAN LIANG:

HE AND WEN CHOU ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS.

XU CHU:

FORMERLY A PEASANT, HIS TALENTS WERE NOTICED BY CAO CAO WHO THEN TURNED HIM INTO ONE OF HIS SUBORDINATES. HE IS NOW A GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO.

YUAN SHAO:

ORIGINALLY AN ADVISOR TO HE JIN, HE LEFT THE CAPITAL AND BECAME THE GOVERNOR OF BOHAI COMMANDERY WHEN DONG ZHUO CAME TO RULE OVER LUOYANG. HE IS CURRENTLY THE GOVERNOR OF JIZHOU.

YUAN SHU:

YOUNGER BROTHER OF YUAN SHAO AND THE GOVERNOR OF NANYANG. AFTER RECEIVING THE IMPERIAL SEAL FROM SUN CE, HE HAS DECLARED HIMSELF AS THE EMPEROR OF ZHONG DYNASTY.

ZHANG FEI YIDE:

A FIERCE, SHORT-TEMPERED WARRIOR WHO IS THE SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER OF LIU BEI AND GUAN YU.

ZHAO YUN ZILONG:

A FORMER RETAINER TO YUAN SHAO BUT HE IS NOW UNDER GONGSUN ZAN'S SERVICE. HE WISHES TO BE LIU BEI'S RETAINER, HOWEVER.

CHARACTERS OF SANGOKUSHI

PART 2: MINOR CHARACTERS

CAO HONG:

A GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO WHO IS ALSO HIS COUSIN. HE SAVED CAO CAO FROM CERTAIN DEATH IN VOLUME 6.

CAO SONG:

CAO CAO'S FATHER AND A FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL. IN VOLUME 8, HE WAS KILLED BY ZHANG KAI, AN ESCORT SENT BY TAO QIAN, WHO WANTED TO STEAL HIS FORTUNES.

CHENG GONG:

A CITY GUARD CAPTAIN WHO ARRESTED CAO CAO, ONLY TO FREE AND ESCAPE WITH CAO CAO AFTER SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS STORY. HE REGRETS HIS DECISION AFTER REALIZING CAO CAO'S CHARACTER. *IN THE ORIGINAL NOVEL, HE DEFECTS TO BECOME LU BU'S ADVISOR.

DING YUAN:

GOVERNOR OF BINGZHOU AND LU BU'S FOSTER-FATHER. HE OBJECTED TO DONG ZHUO'S SCHEME TO PLACE PRINCE CHENLIU AS THE EMPEROR OF HAN. HE WAS KILLED BY LU BU.

EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG:

FORMER EMPEROR LING'S MOTHER AND EMPEROR XIAN'S GRANDMOTHER. IN VOLUME 3, CONSORT HE ORDERED FOR HER DEATH IN ORDER TO SECURE HER SON LIU BIAN'S SEAT AS THE NEXT EMPEROR OF HAN.

GAO SHUN:

ONE OF LU BU'S TRUSTED GENERALS.

GUO SI:

A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED UNDER DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED. IN VOLUME 9, HE AND LI JUE FIGHT OVER THE EMPEROR BUT ENDS UP LOSING THE EMPEROR TO CAO CAO.

HUA XIONG:

ONE OF DONG ZHUO'S GENERALS. HE DEFEATED SUN JIAN'S ARMY BUT WAS LATER KILLED BY GUAN YU IN VOLUME 5.

JIANG QIN:

FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH ZHOU TAI BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE AFTER REMEMBERING HOW FIERCE HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN, WAS LIKE. HE AND JIANG QIN WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN ALLOWING SUN CE TO CAPTURE NIUZHU.

LADY FUYOU:

FICTIONAL CHARACTER CREATED BY MITSUTERU YOKOYAMA AND LIU BEI'S FIRST LOVE. ZHANG FEI FORMERLY SERVED HER FAMILY, WHO WERE ALL KILLED BY THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELS.

LI JUE:

A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED UNDER DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED. IN VOLUME 9, HE AND GUO SI FIGHT OVER THE EMPEROR BUT ENDS UP LOSING THE EMPEROR TO CAO CAO.

LIU BIAN:

THE SON OF CONSORT HE AND WAS BRIEFLY THE EMPEROR OF HAN AFTER EMPEROR LING'S DEATH. HE WAS DEPOSED BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER BY LI RU.

LIU XIE (EMPEROR XIAN OF HAN):

FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE PRINCE OF CHENLIU, HE IS THE CURRENT EMPEROR OF HAN. HE BECAME THE EMPEROR WHEN DONG ZHUO FORCIBLY DETHRONED HIS HALF-BROTHER LIU BIAN.

LIU YAO:

GOVERNOR OF YANGZHOU. HE STOLE THE LANDS OF DANYANG AWAY FROM SUN CE'S UNCLE, WU JIN. IN VOLUME 10, SUN CE SETS OUT TO RECLAIM HIS UNCLE'S LOST LANDS AND CONQUER THE REST OF YANGZHOU.

TAO QIAN:

THE KIND GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU WHO ACCIDENTALLY ANGERED CAO CAO WHEN HIS DISLOYAL SUBORDINATE ZHANG KAI KILLED CAO CAO'S FATHER, CAO SONG.

ZHANG BAO:

ZHANG JIAO'S YOUNGER BROTHER AND THE YELLOW TURBAN'S GENERAL OF THE LAND. HE WAS KILLED BY LIU BEI IN VOLUME 2.

ZHANG JIAO:

LEADER OF THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION. HE PASSED AWAY DUE TO ILLNESS IN VOLUME 3.

ZHOU TAI:

FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH JIANG QIN BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE AFTER REMEMBERING HOW FIERCE HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN, WAS LIKE. HE AND JIANG QIN WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN ALLOWING SUN CE TO CAPTURE NIUZHU.

ZHANG YING:

ONE OF LIU YAO'S GENERALS. HE WAS SENT TO DEFEND NIUZHU FROM SUN CE BUT WAS DEFEATED WHEN BANDITS (JIANG QIN AND ZHOU TAI) STAGED AN UPRISING FROM WITHIN.

ZHANG ZHAO/ZHANG HONG:

THE TWO GENIUSES OF JIANGDONG THAT ARE REFERRED TO AS THE "TWO ZHANGS." SUN CE SOUGHT TO ASK FOR THEIR ASSITANCE BEFORE SETTING OUT ON HIS CAMPAIGN TO CONQUER SOUTHEASTERN CHINA. AFTER SUN CE'S ADAMANT INSISTENCE, THEY FINALLY AGREED TO HELP HIM.

-MORE TO COME IN THE FUTURE-

SANGOKUSHI

13

XUANDE'S CRISIS

LU BU FENGXIAN

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

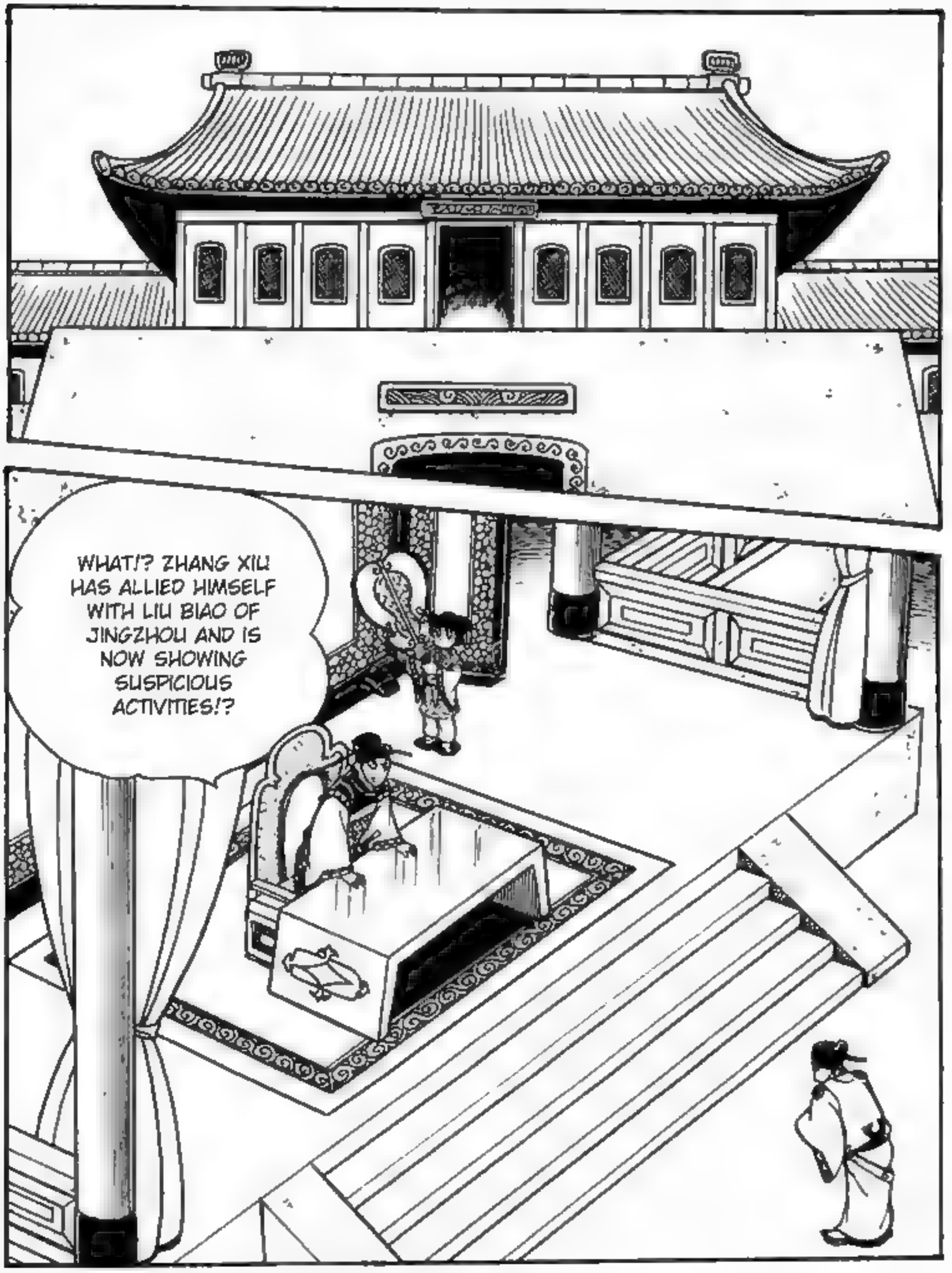
SANGOKUSHI (ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS)

三国志

VOLUME 13
XUANDE'S CRISIS

【月刊『希望の友』掲載】

THE CHENS' SECRET PLOT 191
BATTLE OF MT. TAISHAN 150
FALL OF XIAOPEI 104
DETECTION 74
BATTLE OF STRATAGEMS 7
TABLE OF CONTENTS


WHAT!? ZHANG XIU HAS ALLIED HIMSELF WITH LIU BIAO OF JINGZHOU AND IS NOW SHOWING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES!?

YES, SIR.

AND YOU'RE SURE ABOUT THIS REPORT...!?

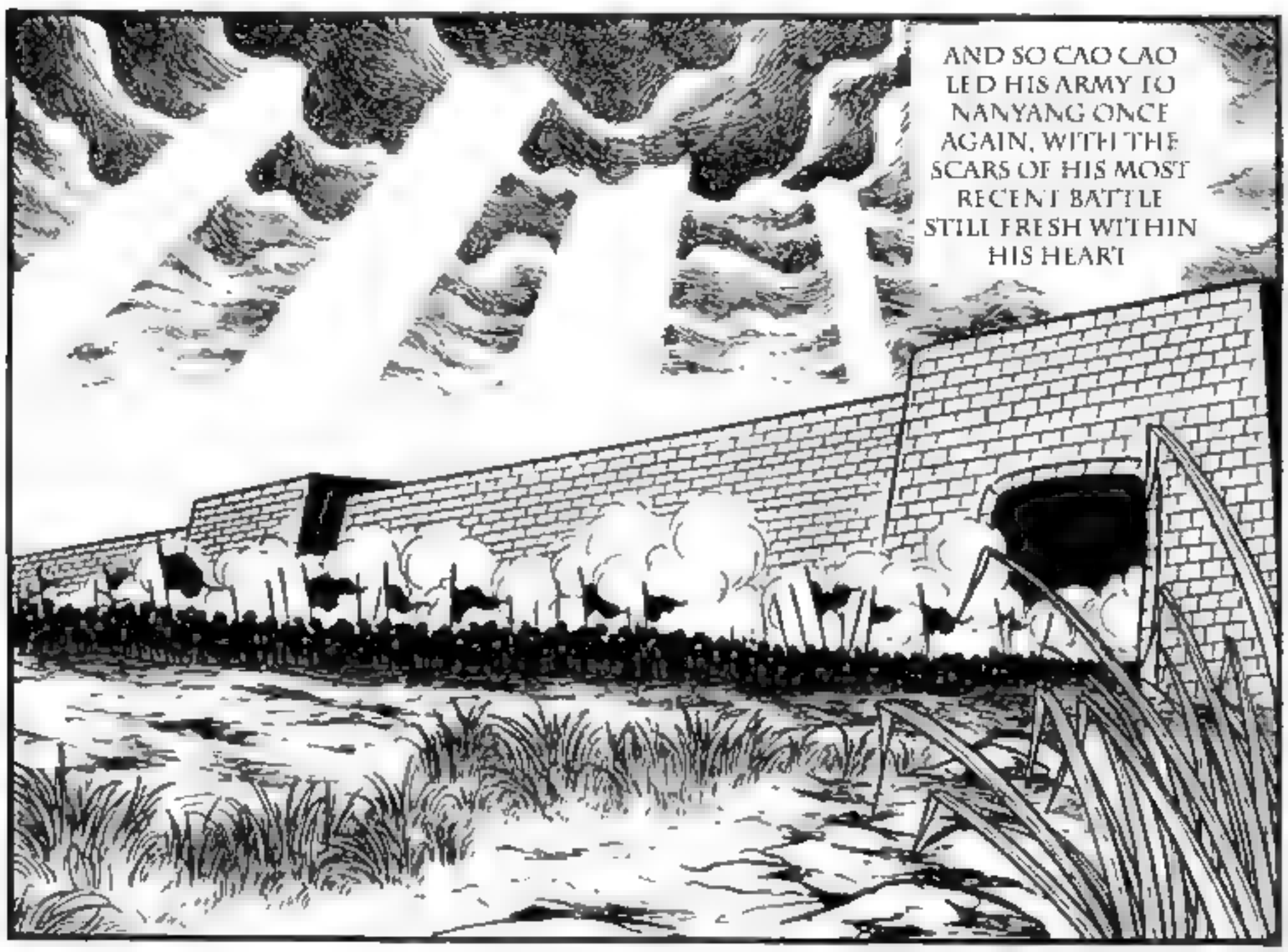
MY LORD, THIS IS A MATTER OF UTMOST URGENCY.

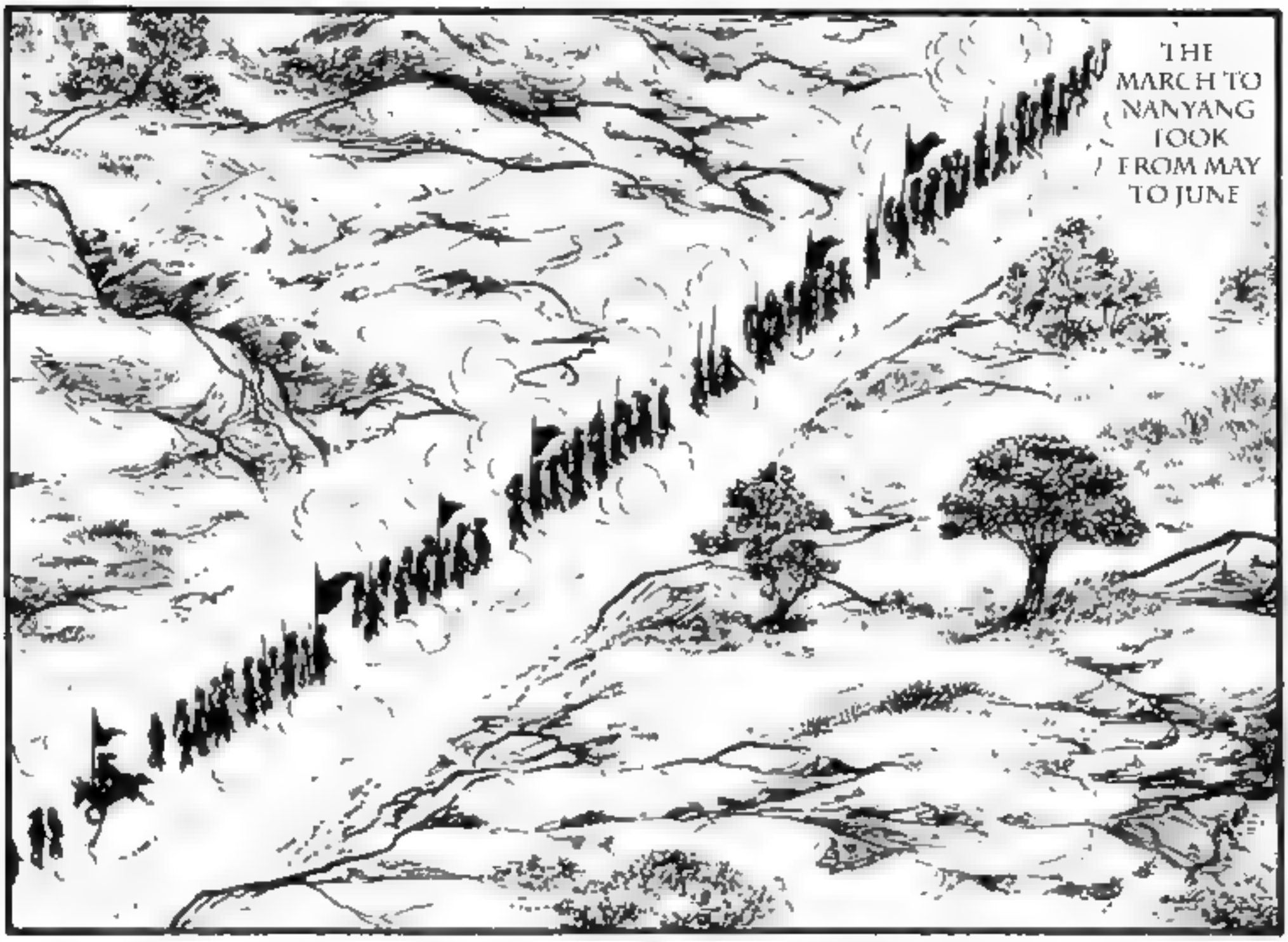
WE CANNOT JUST LEAVE ZHANG XIU ALONE, WHO PREVIOUSLY PLOTTED TO ATTACK XUCHANG. NOW THAT HE EVEN HAS LIU BIAO'S SUPPORT, HE HAS BECOME EVEN MORE DANGEROUS.

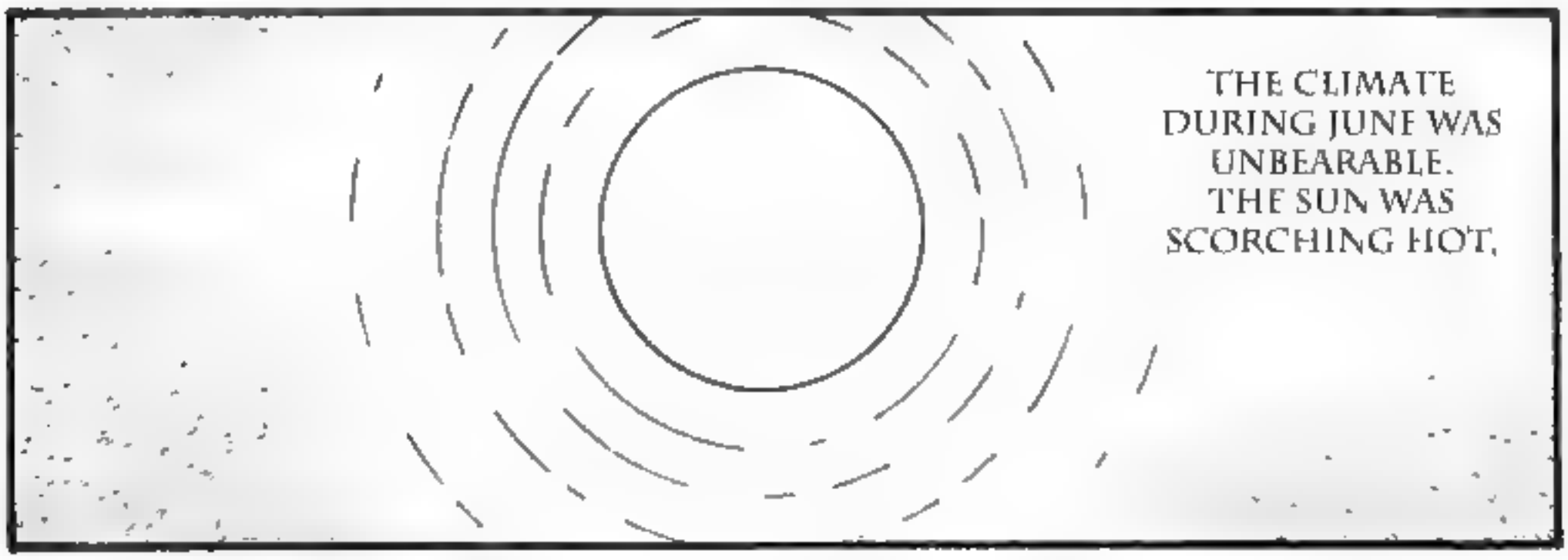
IT IS BETTER TO PUT OUT A FIRE WHEN IT IS JUST A SPARK...

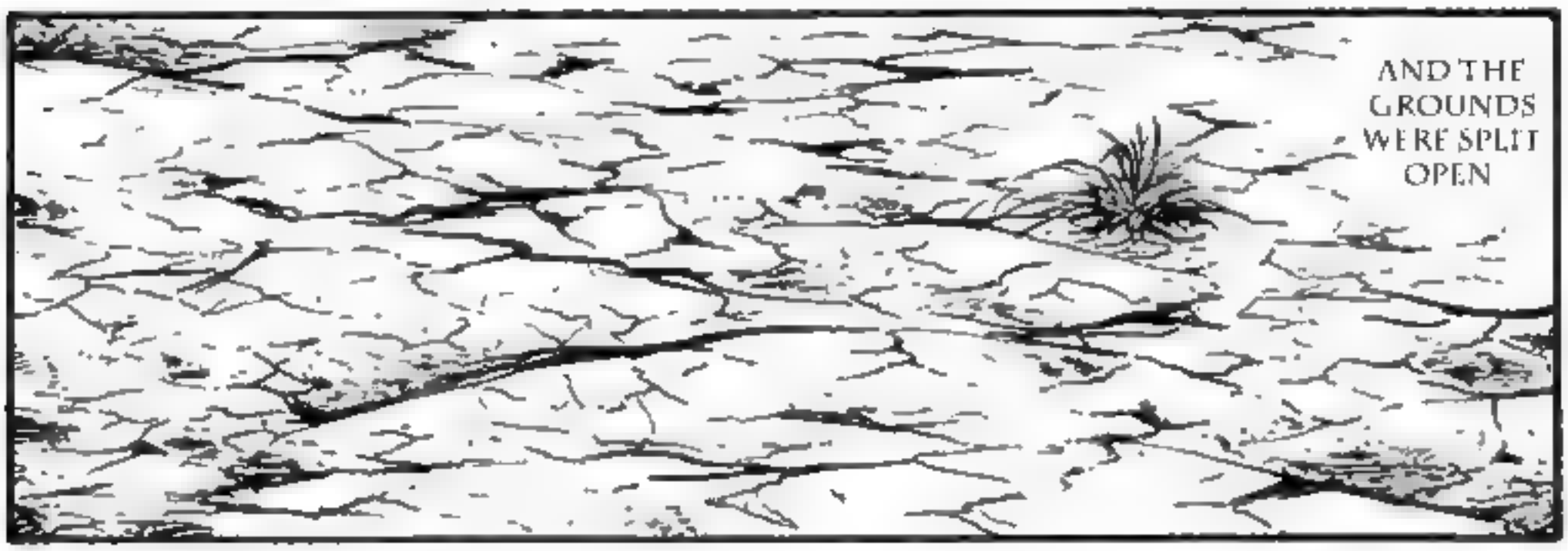
YES... WITH LIU BIAO ON HIS SIDE, ZHANG XIU MAY ATTACK XUCHANG FOR REAL THE NEXT TIME.

ALRIGHT, MOBILIZE THE ARMY AT ONCE!


AND SO CAO CAO LED HIS ARMY TO NANYANG ONCE AGAIN, WITH THE SCARS OF HIS MOST RECENT BATTLE STILL FRESH WITHIN HIS HEART


THE MARCH TO NANYANG TOOK FROM MAY TO JUNE


THE CLIMATE DURING JUNE WAS UNBEARABLE. THE SUN WAS SCORCHING HOT.


AND THE GROUNDS WERE SPLIT OPEN

MOREOVER, THE JOURNEY WAS EXACERBATED BY THE FACT THAT THEY NEEDED TO CROSS OVER THE FUNIU MOUNTAINS TO ENTER NANYANG

IT WAS TO NO ONE'S SURPRISE THAT MANY SOLDIERS COLLAPSED DUE TO EXHAUSTION DURING THIS TREK

NEED... WATER...

W... WATER...

WHAT!

P-PLUMS ..?

SOLDIERS! ONCE WE CROSS THESE MOUNTAINS, WE WILL SOON COME TO A SMALL FOREST OF PLUM TREES!

I DON'T CARE IF THEY'RE PLUMS OR WHATEVER AS LONG AS I CAN QUENCH MY THIRST ...!

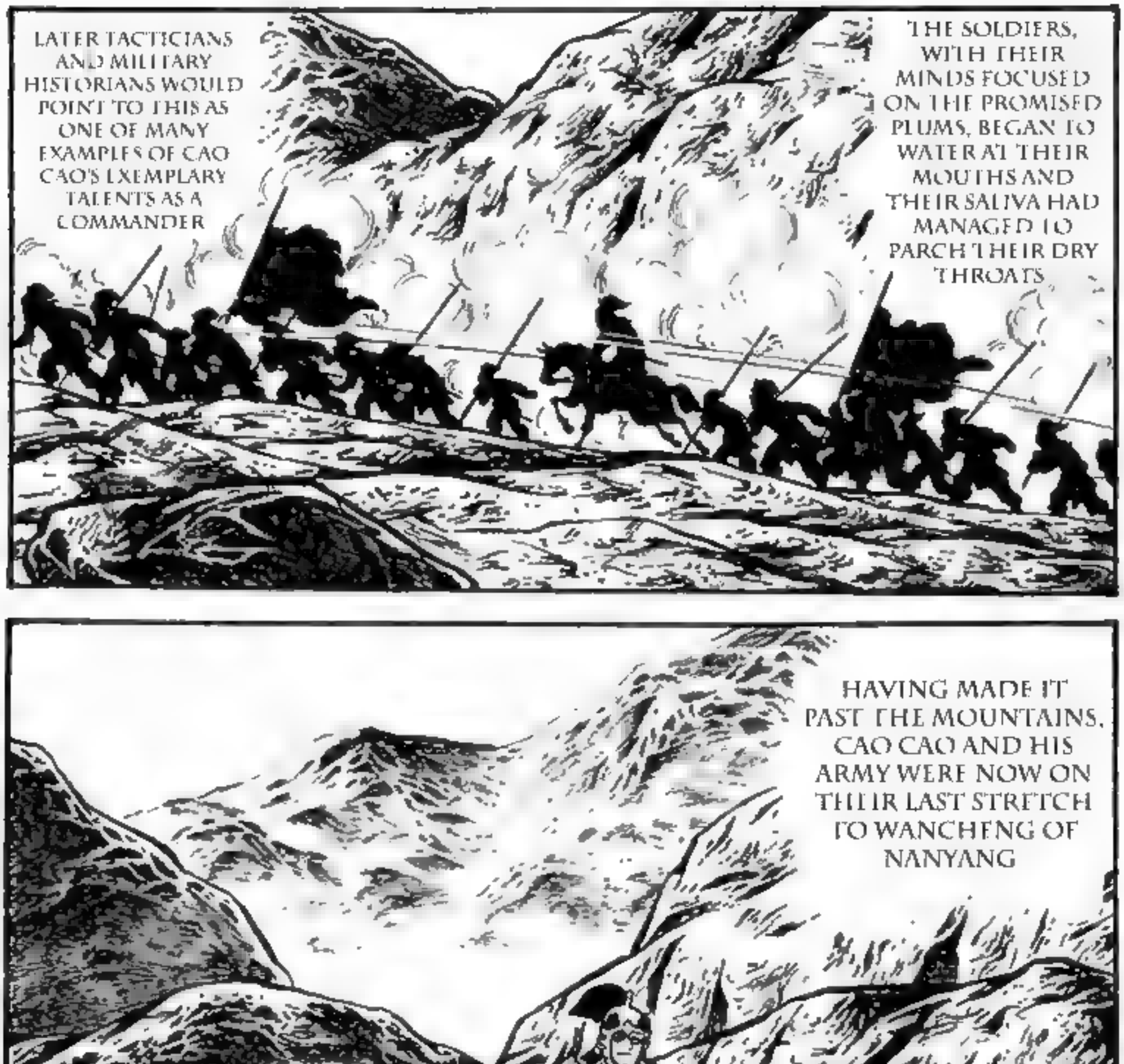
PLUMS!

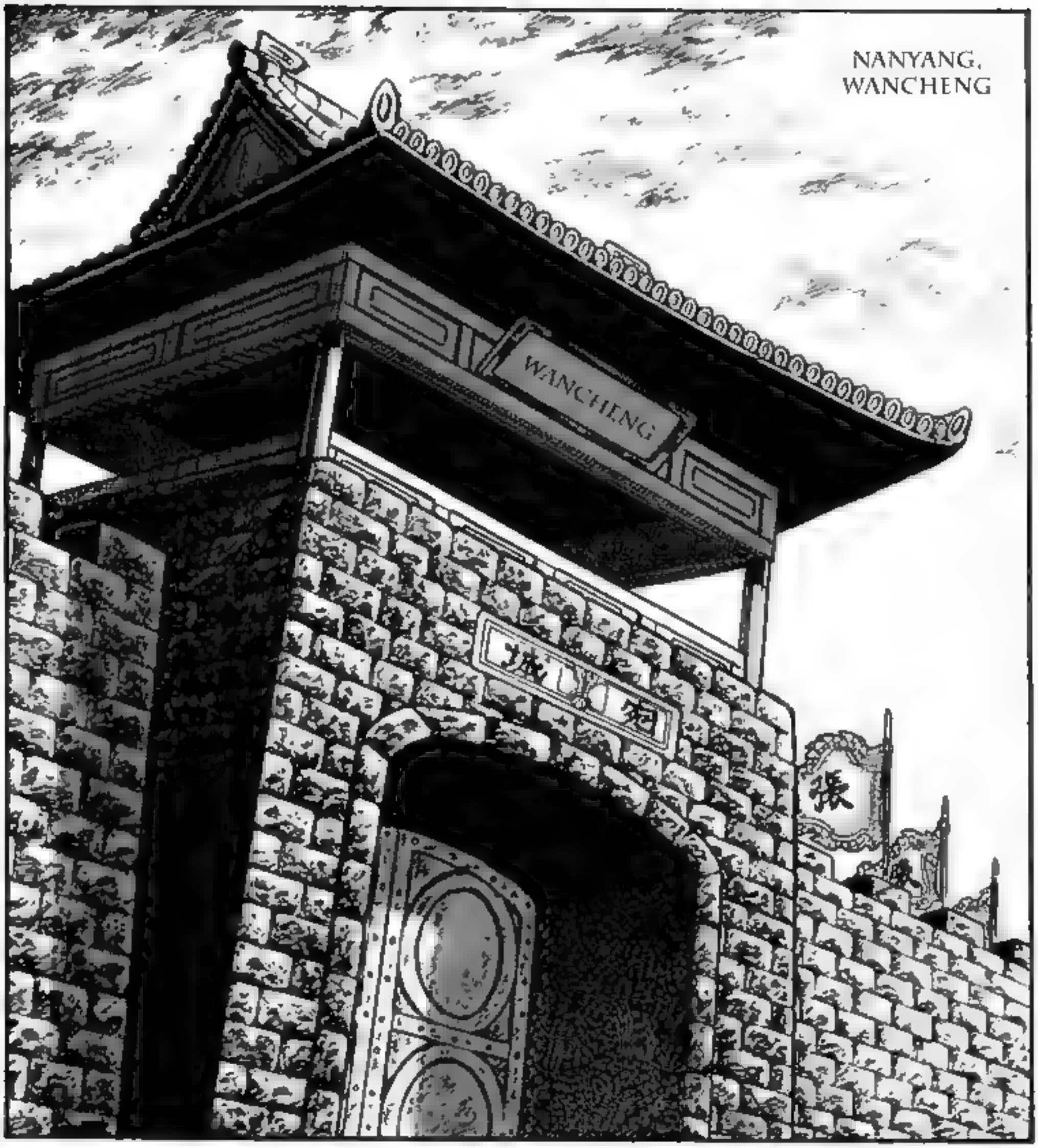
THAT'S RIGHT. AND ONCE THERE, YOU MAY ALL TAKE A REST AND EAT AS MUCH PLUMS AS THERE ARE.

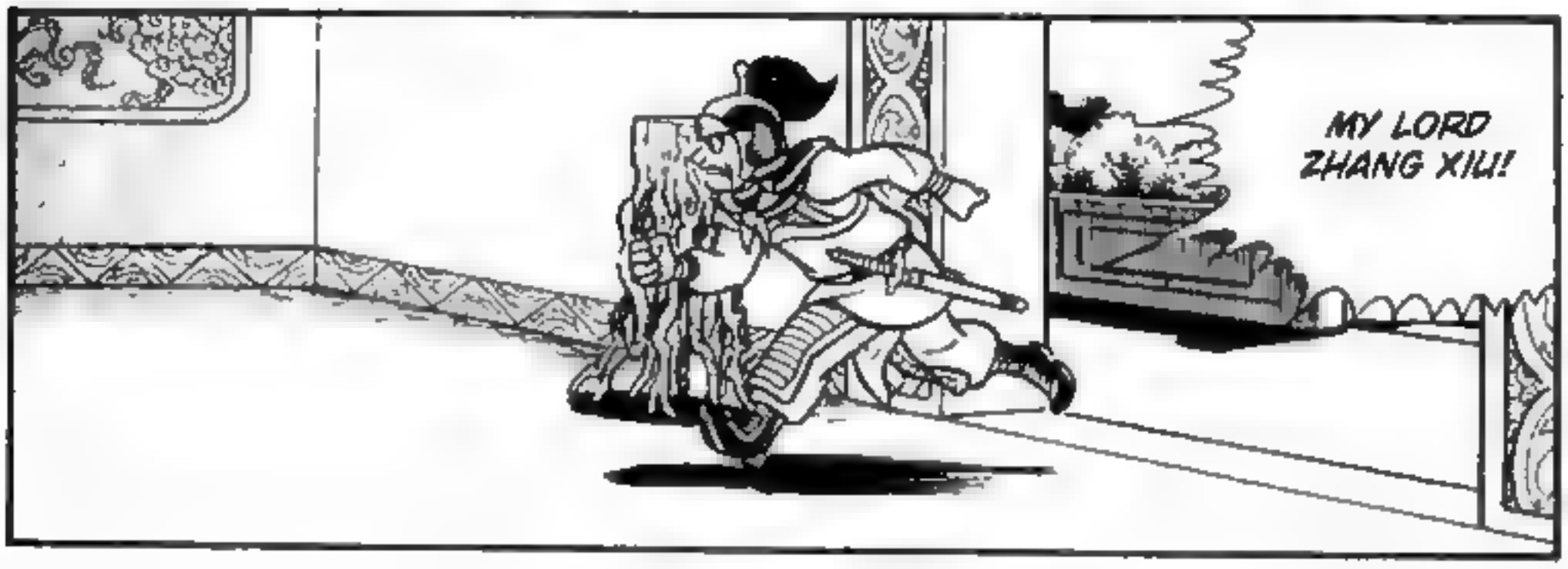
COME ON, JUST A LITTLE FARTHER!

P-PLUMS...! COOL AND JUICY PLUMS...!

COME ON MEN, THERE ARE PLUMS PAST THESE MOUNTAINS!


LATER TACTICIANS AND MILITARY HISTORIANS WOULD POINT TO THIS AS ONE OF MANY EXAMPLES OF CAO CAO'S EXEMPLARY TALENTS AS A COMMANDER
THE SOLDIERS, WITH THEIR MINDS FOCUSED ON THE PROMISED PLUMS, BEGAN TO WATER AT THEIR MOUTHS AND THEIR SALIVA HAD MANAGED TO PARCH THEIR DRY THROATS
HAVING MADE IT PAST THE MOUNTAINS, CAO CAO AND HIS ARMY WERE NOW ON THEIR LAST STRETCH TO WANCHENG OF NANYANG

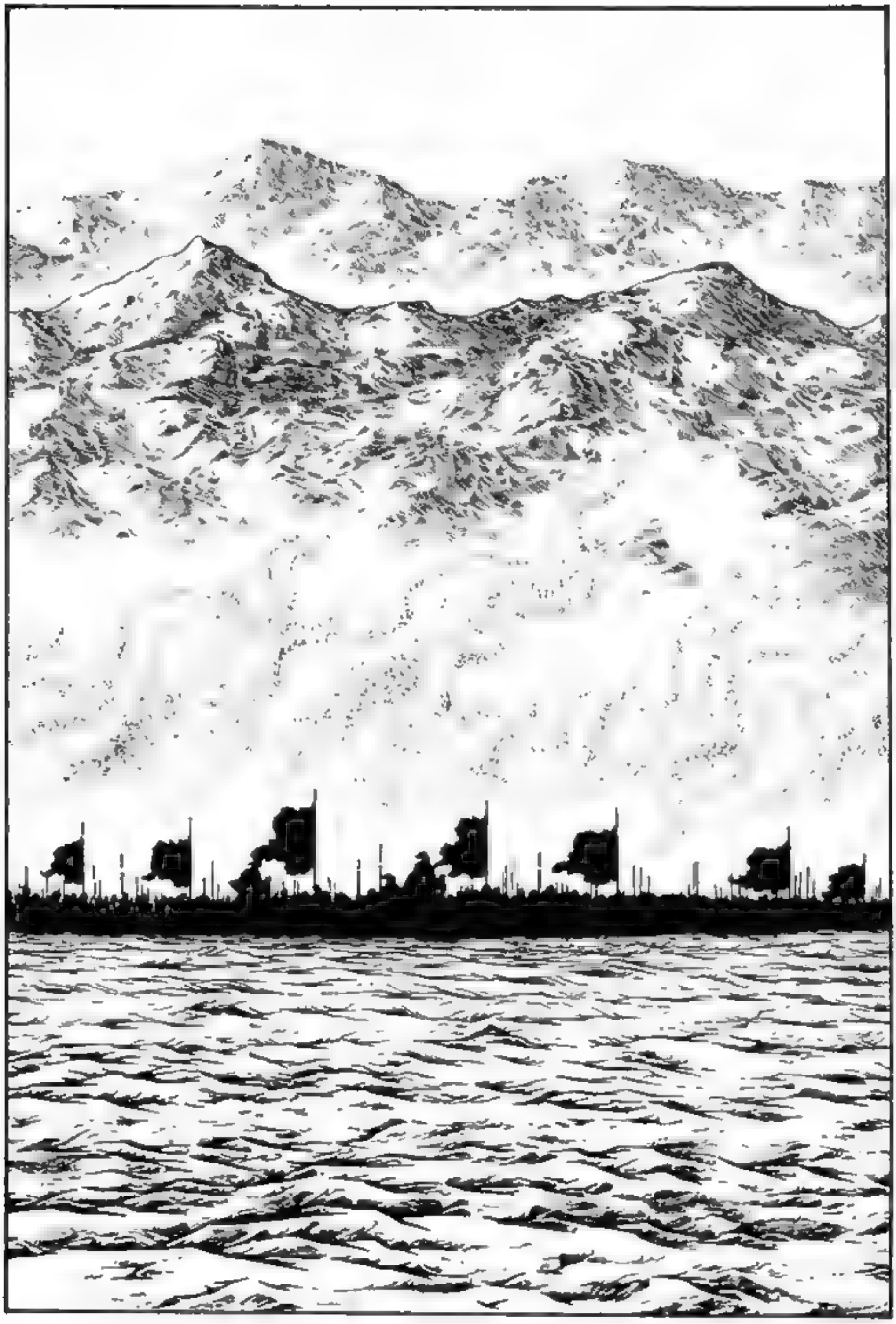

NANYANG,
WANCHENG
WANCHENG
張


MY LORD
ZHANG XIU!

THEY'RE HERE ALREADY!?

SIR, CAO CAO'S FORCES HAVE ARRIVED!

HMMM...



HAVE YOU SENT A REQUEST FOR REINFORCEMENTS TO LIU BAO OF JINGZHOU?

YES, OF COURSE, SIR.

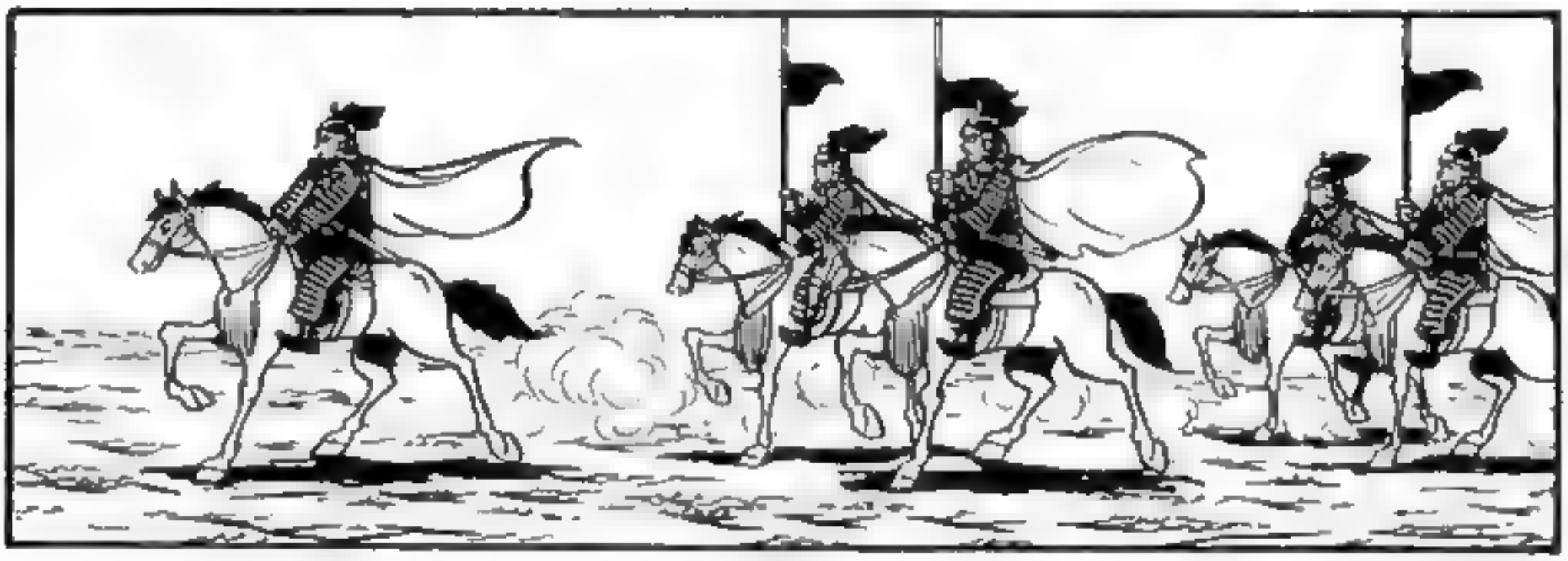
YES, BUT ACCORDING TO OUR SCOUTS, THE ENEMIES ARE TIRED AND WORN OUT FROM THE LONG JOURNEY DURING THE HEAT.

JIA XU, IT SEEMS THEY NUMBER AROUND 300,000.

GOOD! COME AT ME IF YOU DARE, CAO CAO! I SHALL NOT FAIL TO TAKE YOUR HEAD THIS TIME, AND WHEN I DO, ALL OF HAN SHALL BE MINE!

GENERALS! COME WITH ME, WE SHALL TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THE CASTLE FIRST!

NOW, THE QUESTION IS HOW TO ATTACK...



THIS IS THE NORTHERN GATE,

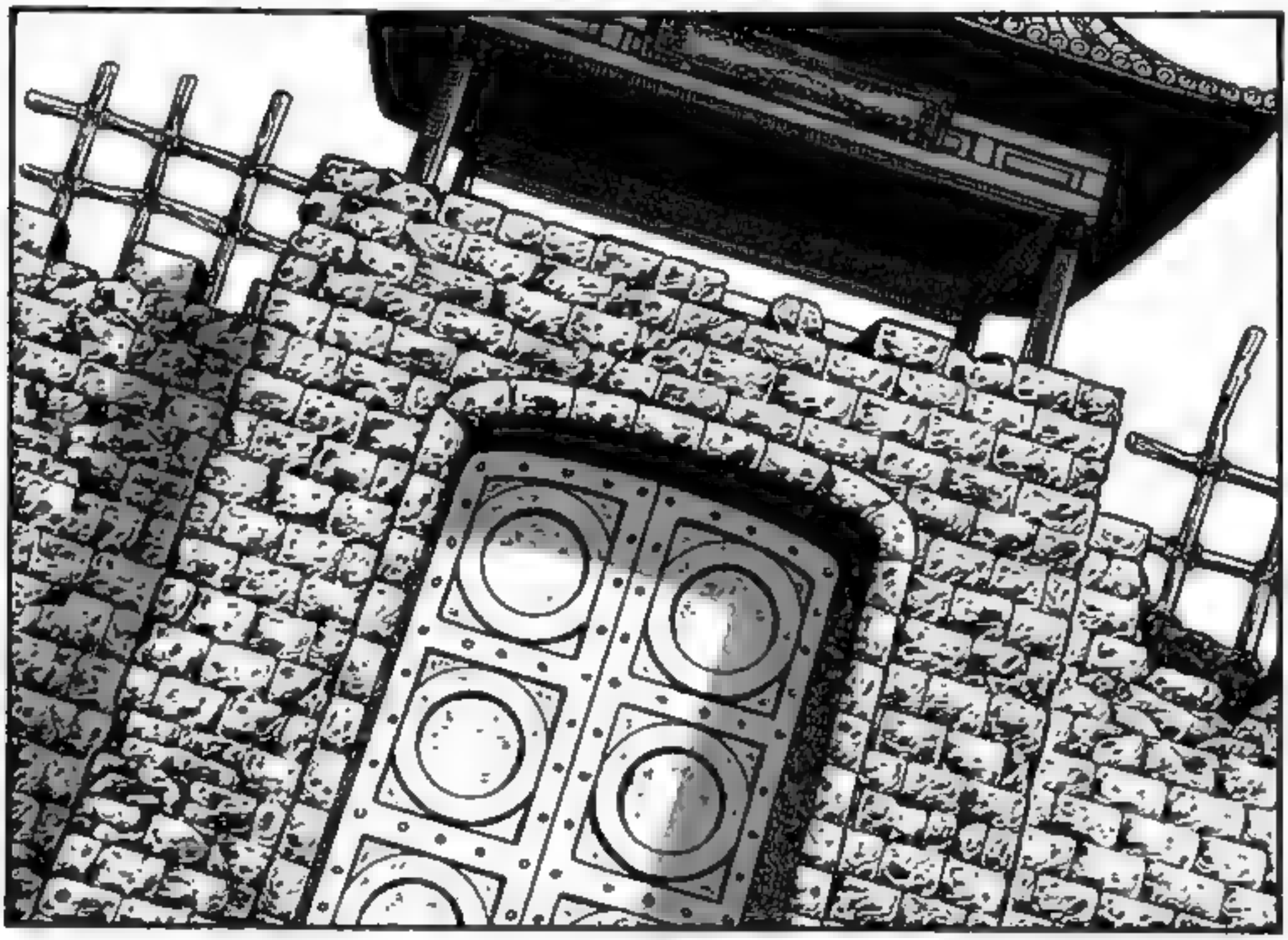
AND THIS IS THE WESTERN GATE, MY LORD.

AND THAT OVER THERE IS THE SOUTHERN GATES.

.....

AH!

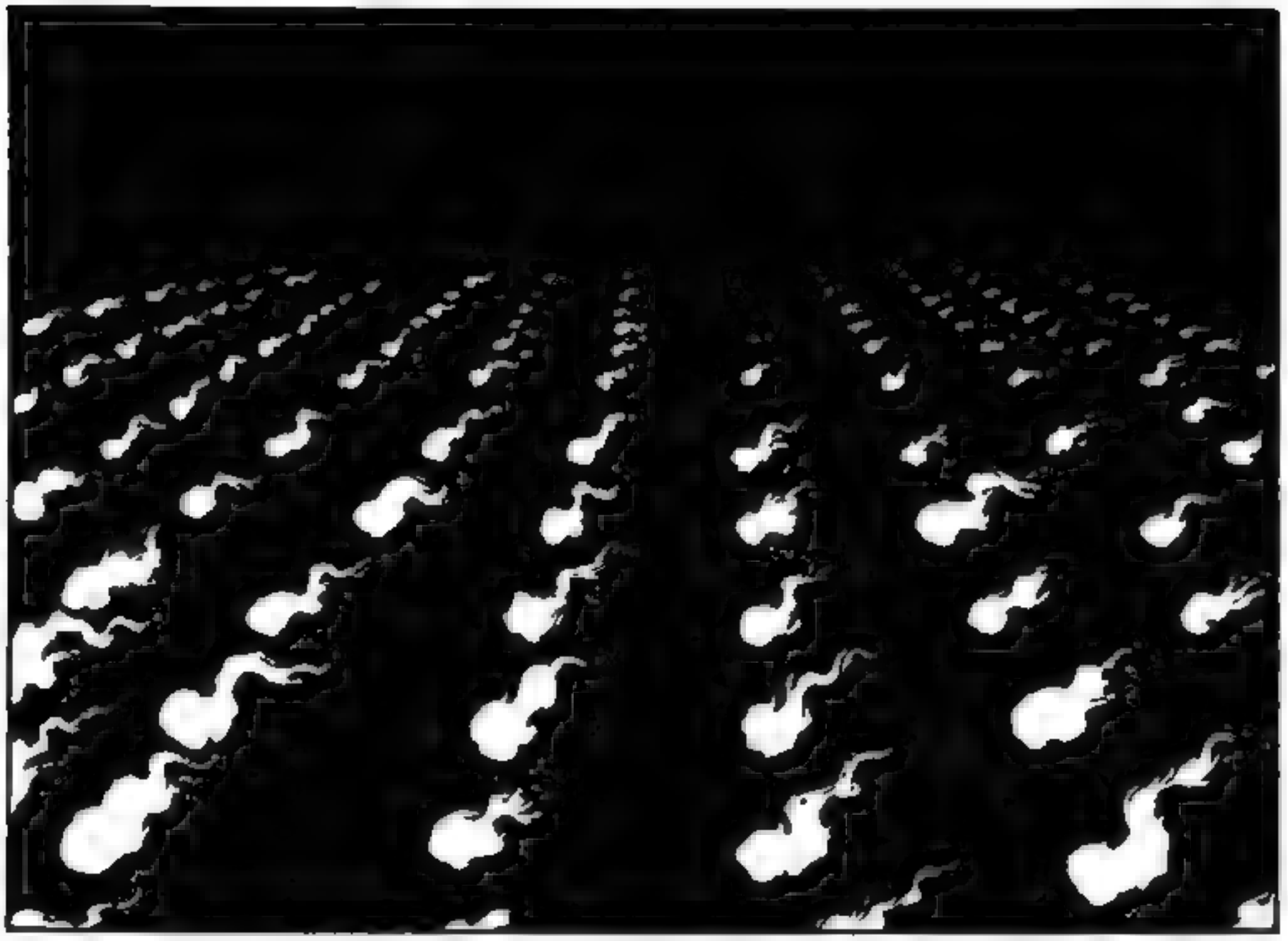
LASTLY, THIS IS THE EASTERN GATE.



HMM, IT SEEMS LIKE THE WALLS HERE ARE STILL UNDER REPAIR.

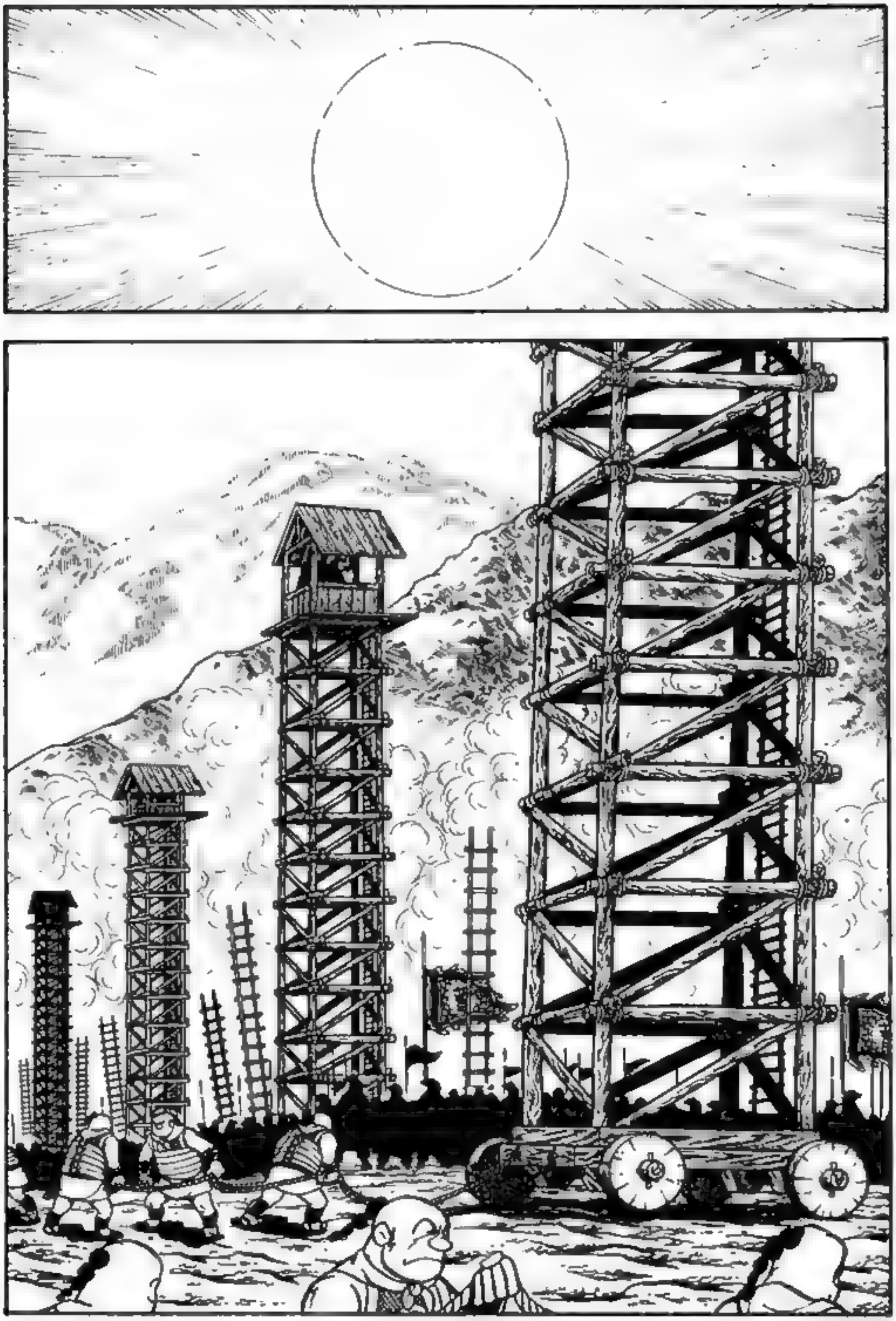
YES, IT APPEARS SO, MY LORD.

GOOD, I'VE DECIDED ON OUR PLAN OF ATTACK.

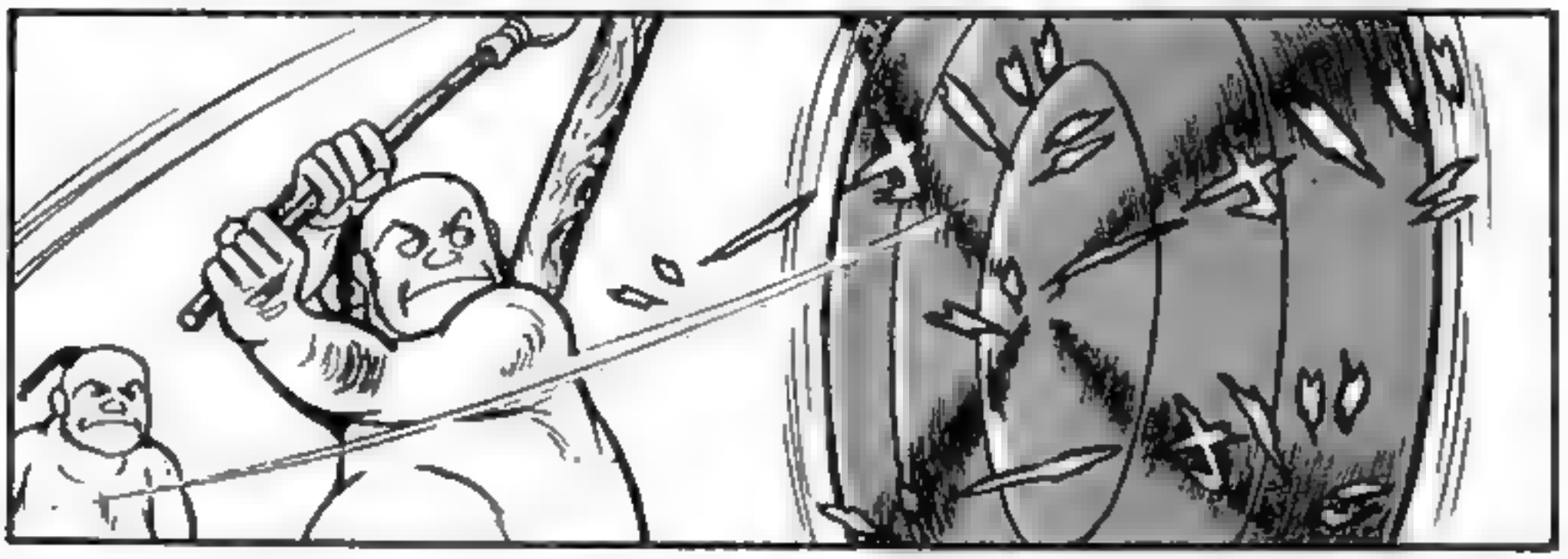


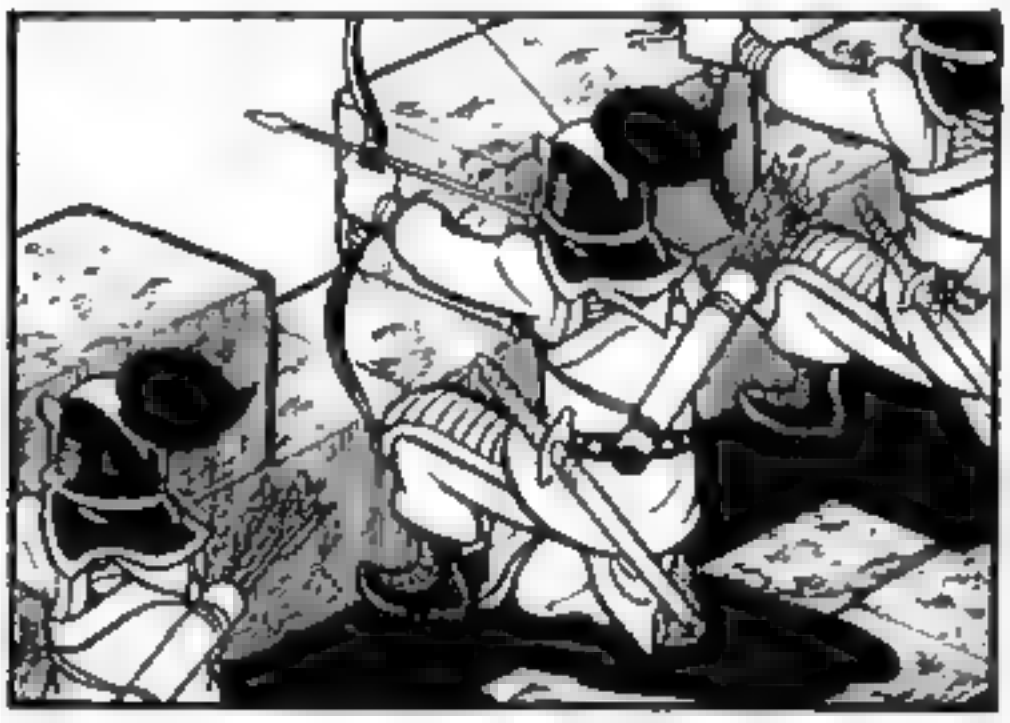
THEN WE SHOULD PLACE MOST OF OUR SOLDIERS AT THE WESTERN GATE AS WELL.

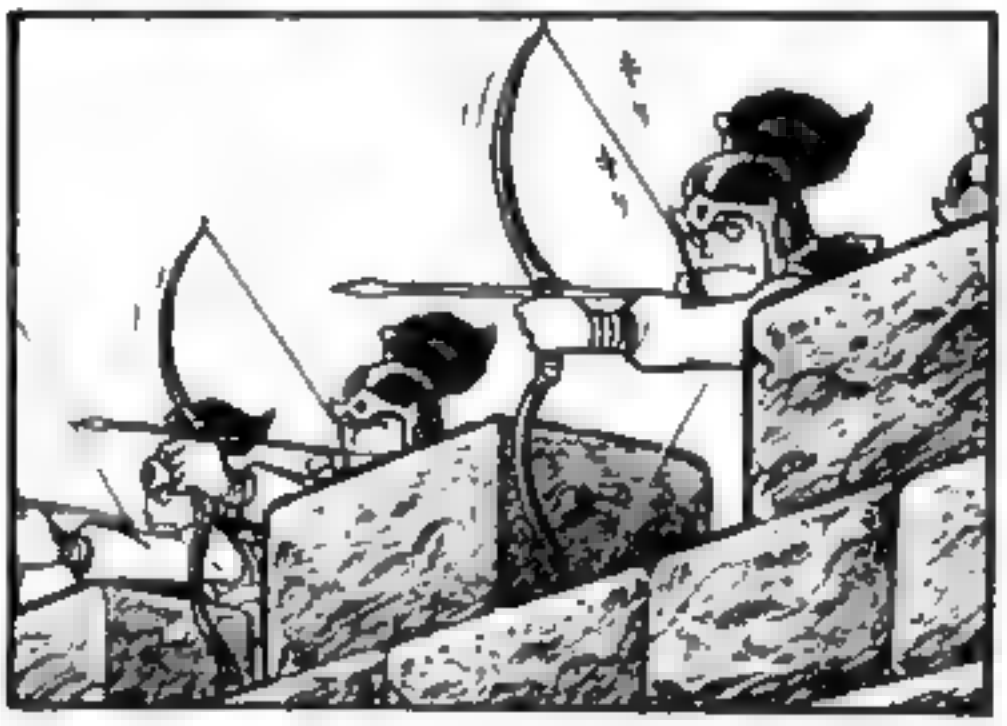
YES, I BELIEVE THEY WILL ATTACK TOMORROW.
JIA XU, IT SEEMS THAT CAO CAO IS CONCENTRATING MOST OF HIS FORCES TO ATTACK ONLY THE WESTERN GATE.



BEGIN
THE
SIEGE!







THEY'VE BEGUN THEIR ATTACK!

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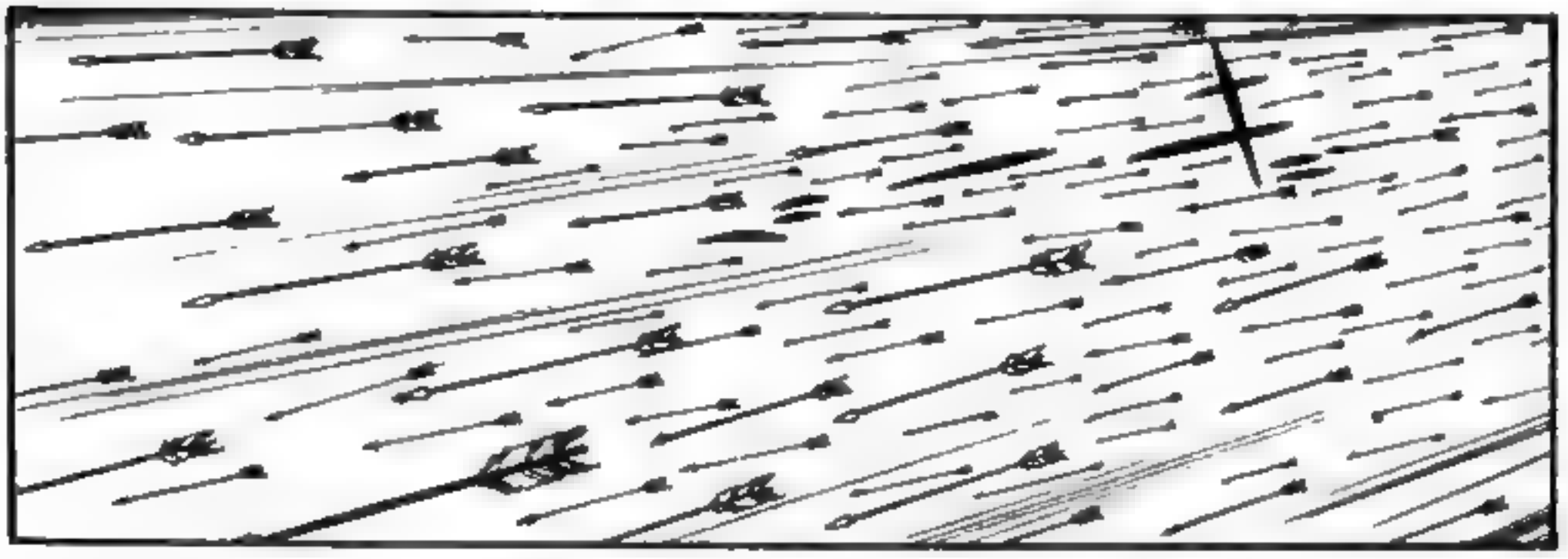
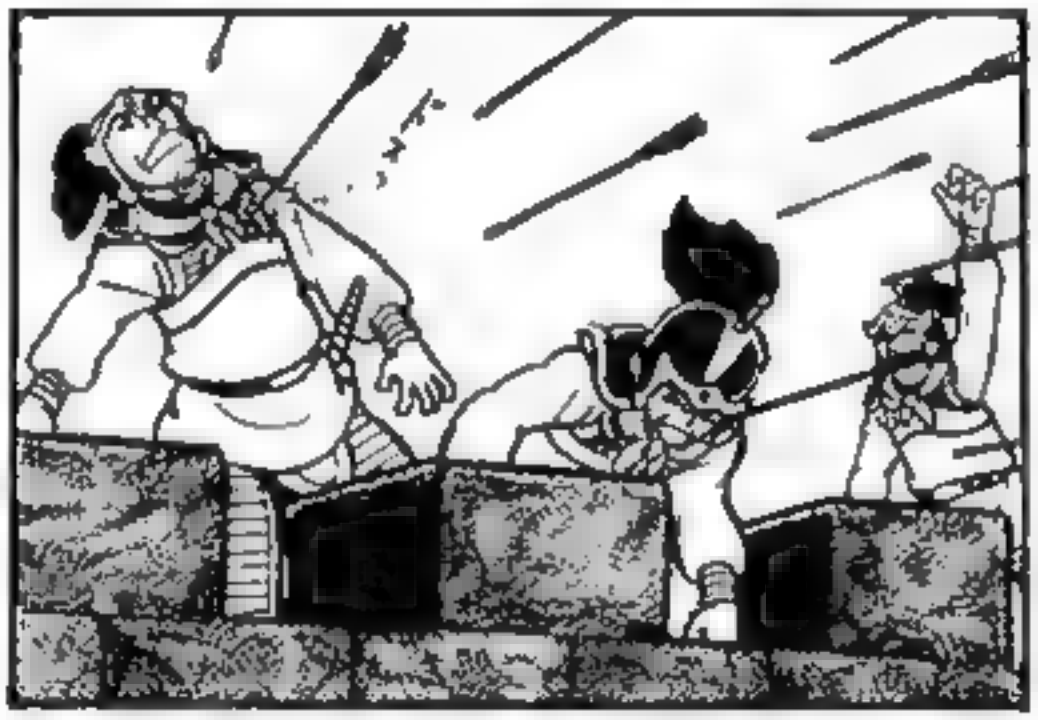
ﾋｭｯ

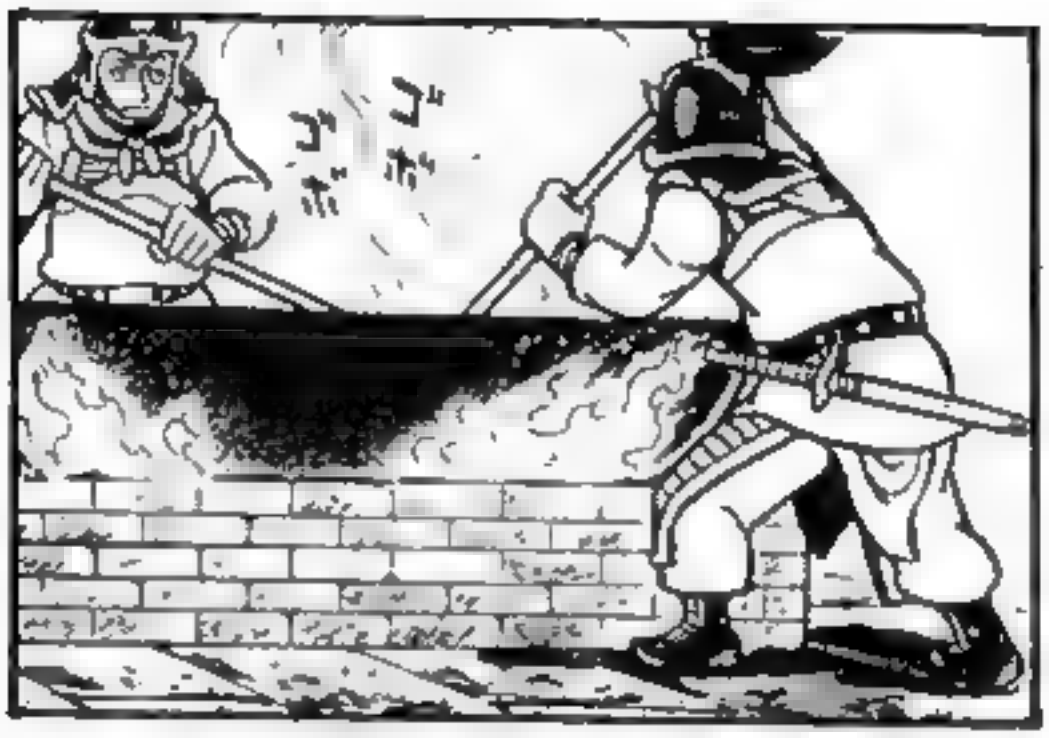
FIRE!

ﾋｭｰ

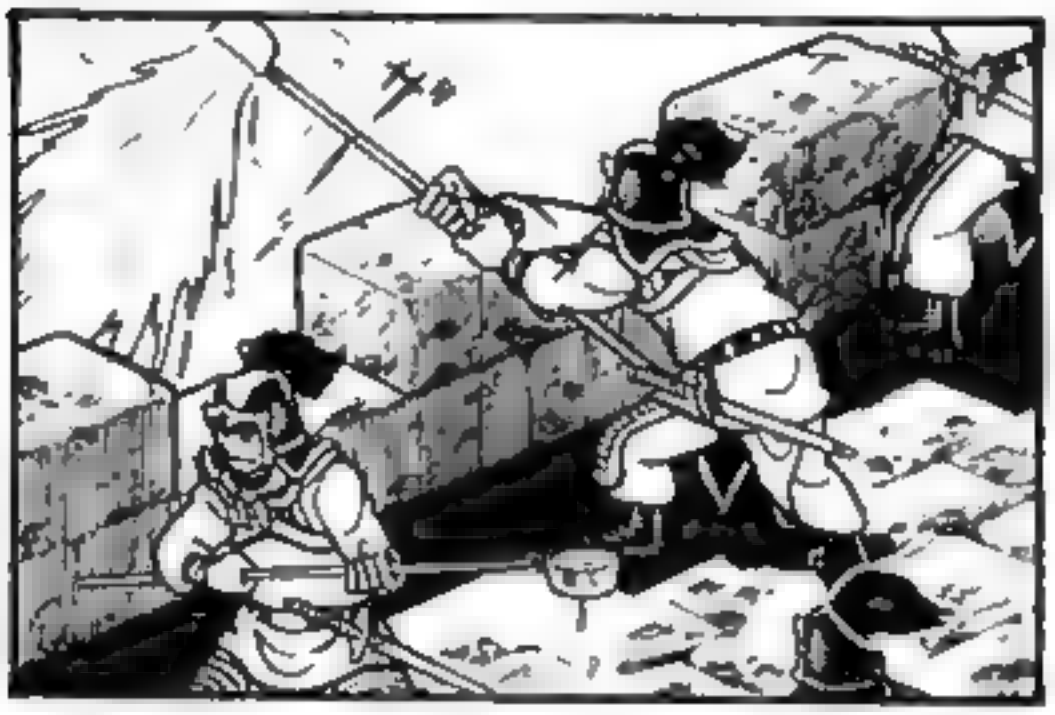


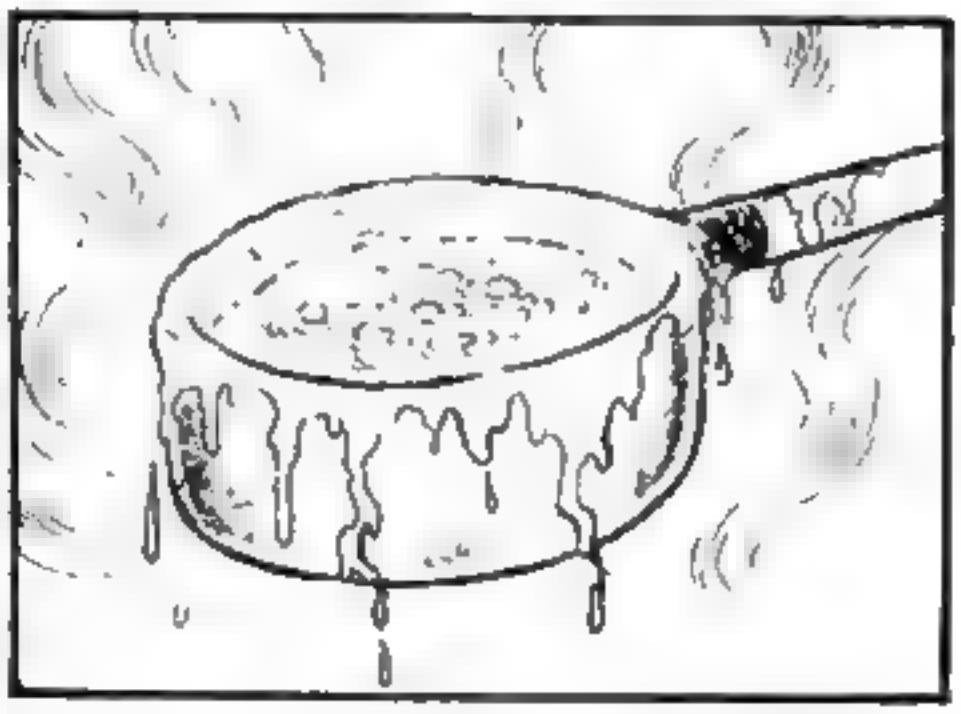


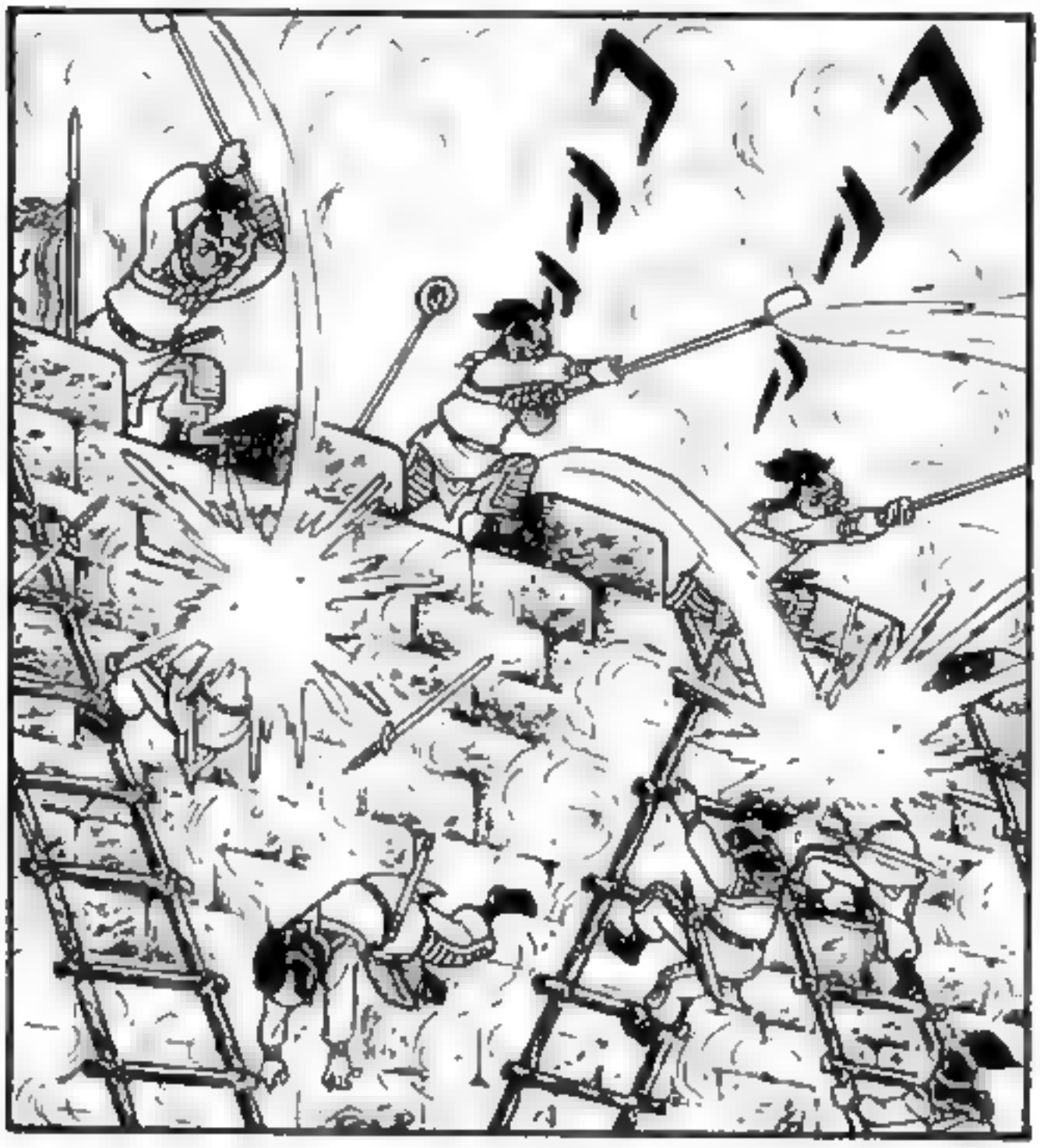
THEY'RE COMING UP THE LADDERS!



NOW! POUR THE BOILING WATER ON THE ENEMIES!



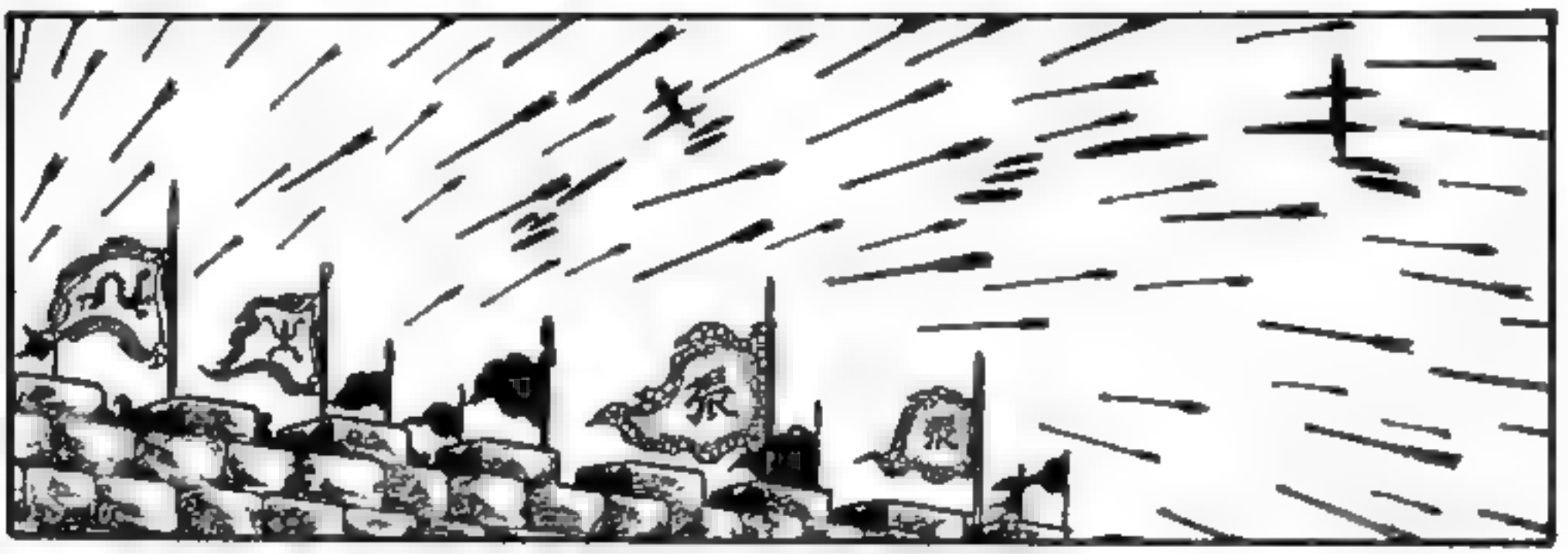


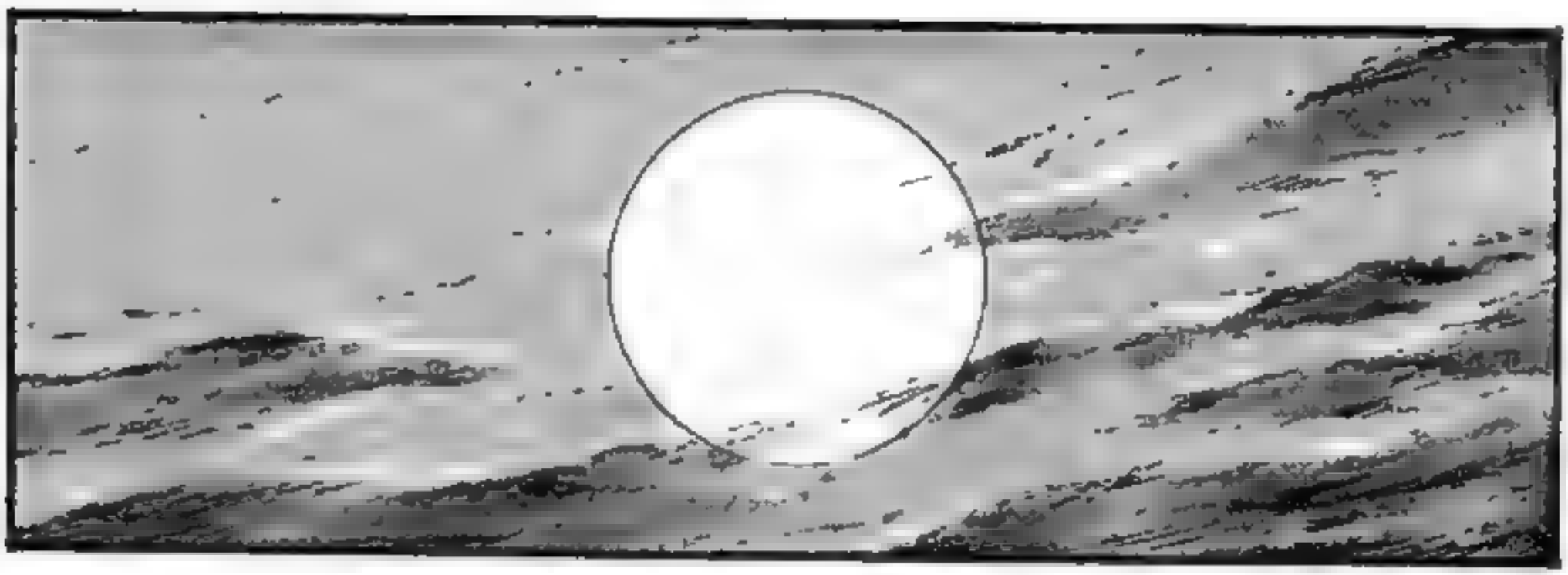


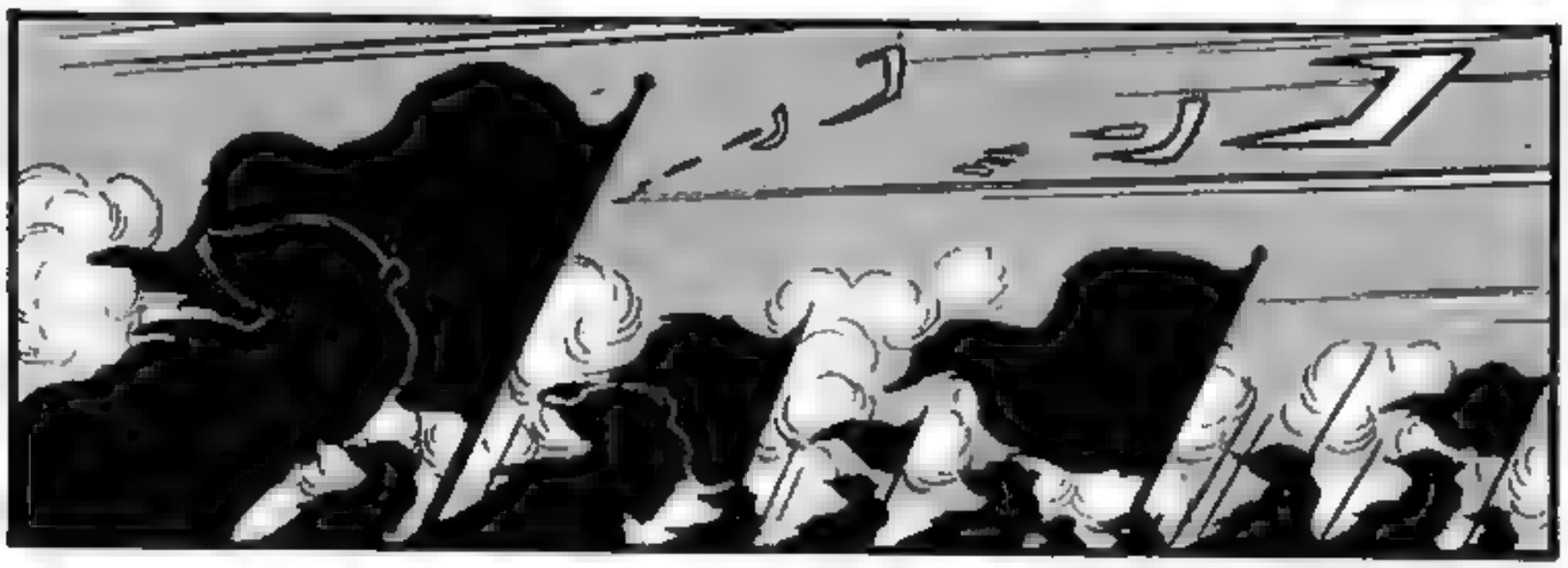
AGHHH!

GAH!

DO NOT FALTER, MY MEN! ARCHERS, RETURN FIRE!







CAO CAO MUST BE TRYING HIS BEST TO CAPTURE THE CASTLE BEFORE LIU BIAO'S REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE TO OUR AID.

NO, THAT IS NOT QUITE THE CASE, MY LORD.

HOW LONG ARE THEY PLANNING TO KEEP THIS UP FOR? IT'S ALREADY BEEN 3 DAYS OF CONSTANT ATTACKING...

WHAT!?

CAO CAO IS AIMING FOR US TO PLACE THE MAJORITY OF OUR SOLDIERS TO DEFEND THE WESTERN WALLS.

WELL OF COURSE, THAT WOULD BE THE EASTERN WALLS WHICH ARE STILL UNDER REPAIR.

LET ME ASK SIR ONCE QUESTION. WHICH WALLS DO YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE WEAKEST?

CAO CAO'S REAL INTENTION IS TO ATTACK THOSE WEAK WALLS OF THE EASTERN GATE.

EXACTLY SIR. NOT ONLY THAT, SOME OF THE BRICKS FOR THE WESTERN WALLS HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY REPLACED BY MUD BRICKS AND ARE VULNERABLE TO AN ENEMY SIEGE.

THIS IS KNOWN AS THE "FEINT AND REVERSAL" PLAN.

BUT BEFORE DOING SO, HE IS ATTACKING THE WESTERN GATE TO MAKE US WITHDRAW OUR SOLDIERS FROM THE EASTERN WALLS AND FOCUS SOLELY ON DEFENDING THE WESTERN WALLS.

WE MUST DEPLOY OUR SOLDIERS BACK TO THE EASTERN GATE AT ONCE!

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I'VE LEFT THE EASTERN GATE TOO POORLY DEFENDED...

DO NOT WORRY, MY LORD. IF CAO CAO IS USING THE "FEINT AND REVERSAL" PLAN, THEN WE SHALL COUNTER IT WITH THE "LURE AND DESTROY" PLAN...

YES, SIR.

GENERALS, HAVE YOU DIVIDED OUR ARMY IN HALF AS I'VE ORDERED?

WE WILL ATTACK THE EASTERN GATE WITH ONE HALF OF OUR ARMY.

BUT WHAT IS MY LORD PLANNING TO DO BY DIVIDING THE ARMY...?

THE OTHER GATES SHOULD BE POORLY DEFENDED AT THE MOMENT.

AFTER ATTACKING THE WESTERN GATE FOR 3 DAYS AND NIGHTS, THE ENEMY FORCES WILL HAVE PLACED ALL THEIR SOLDIERS TO GUARD THE WESTERN WALLS.

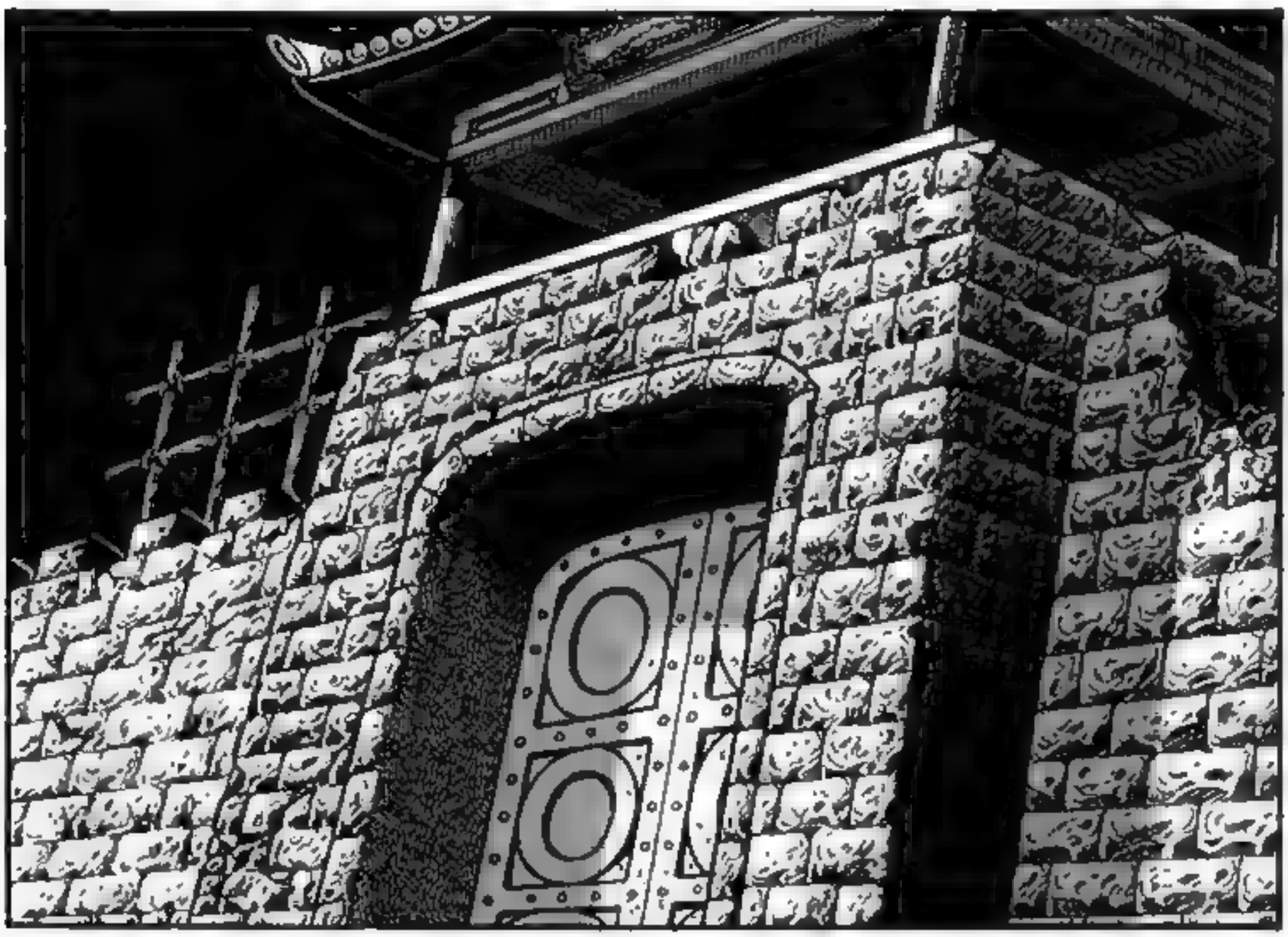
SO THAT WAS WHAT SIR WAS PLANNING...

AND AMONG THEM, THE EASTERN GATE IS THE IDEAL PLACE TO ATTACK DUE TO ITS WALLS STILL UNDERGOING REPAIR.

IT IS A BRILLIANT PLAN, MY LORD.

ALRIGHT, LET'S MOVE ON OUT!

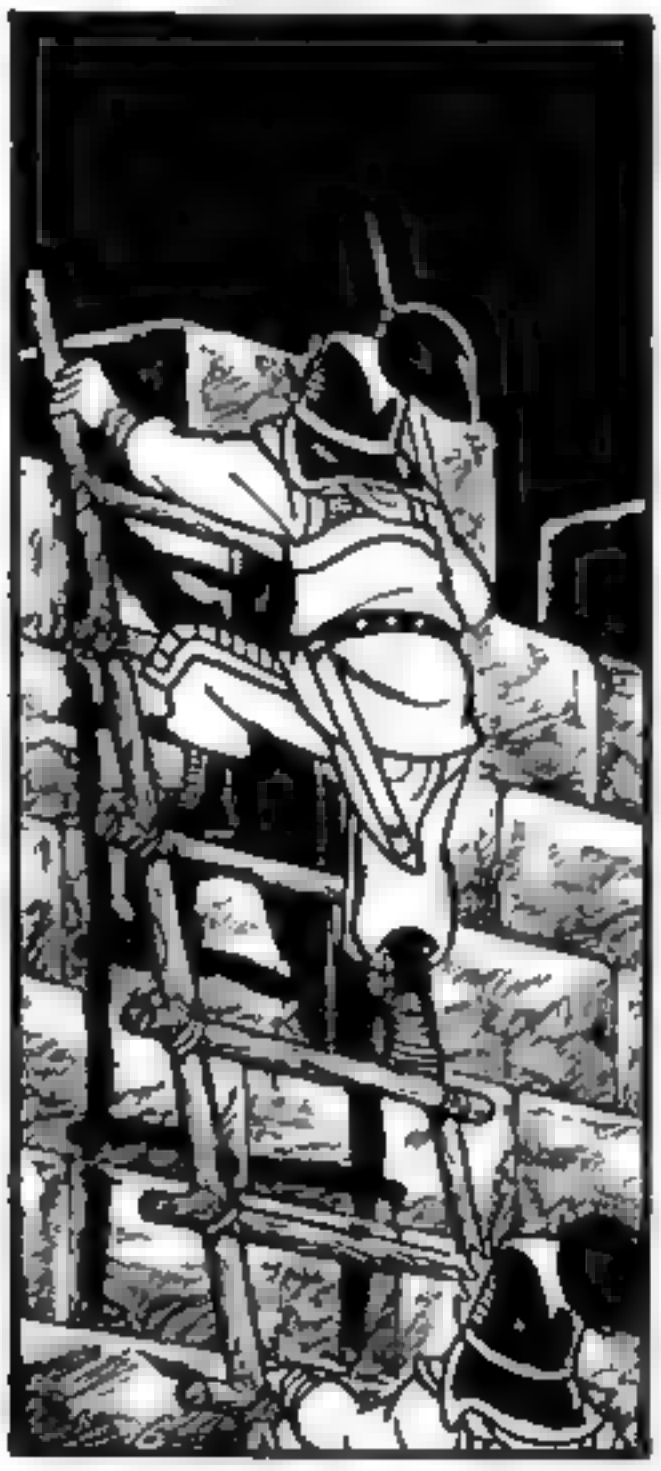
AND SO, CAO CAO LED ONE HALF OF HIS ARMY TO ATTACK THE EASTERN GATES

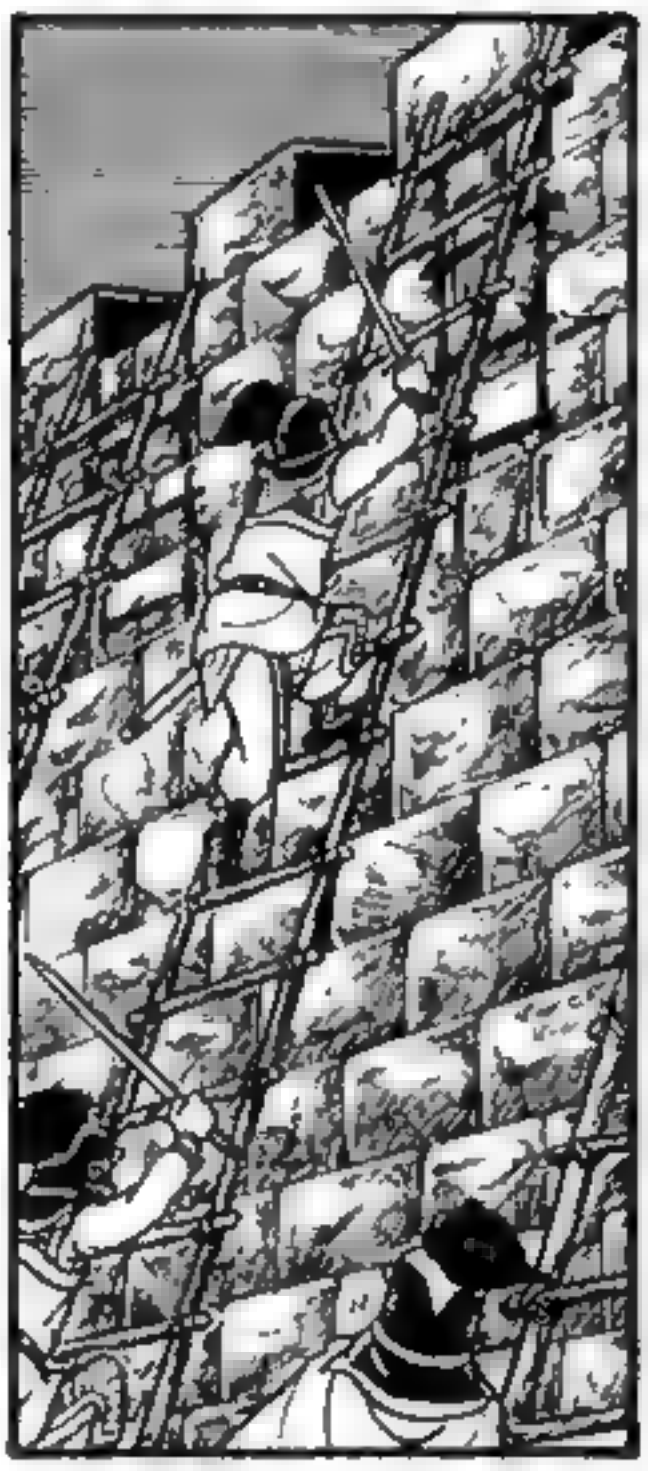


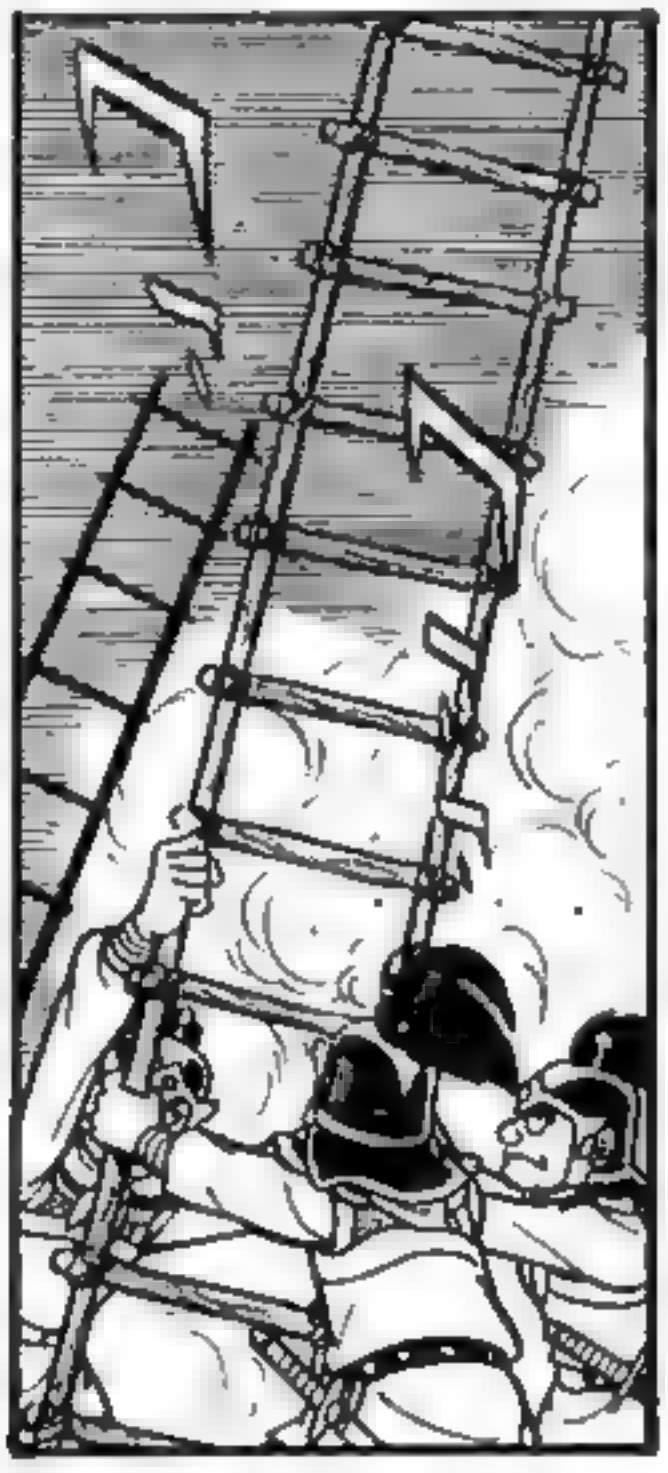
JUST AS SIR PREDICTED!

LOOK! NOT EVEN A SINGLE GUARD!

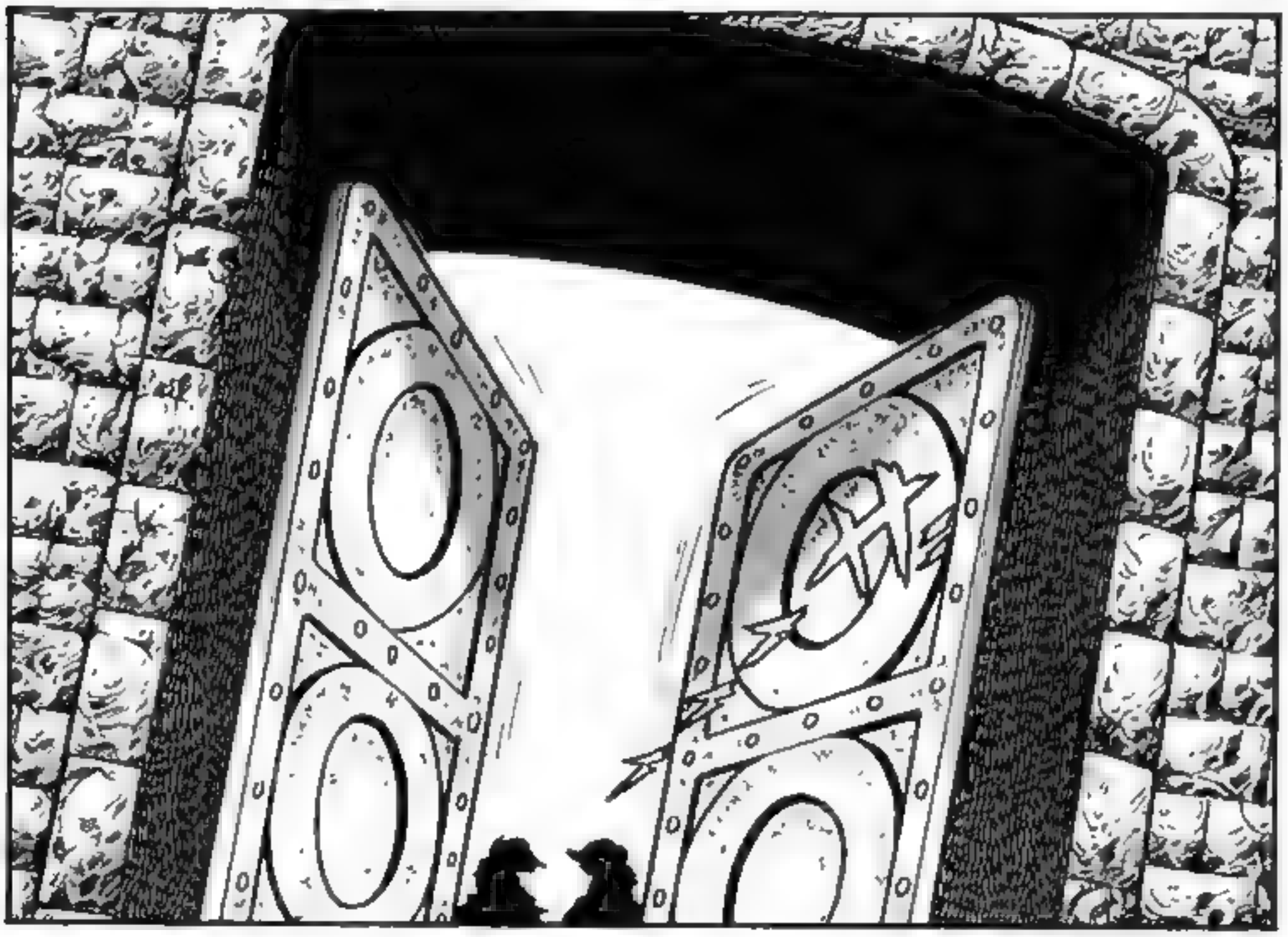
ALRIGHT, CHARGE!



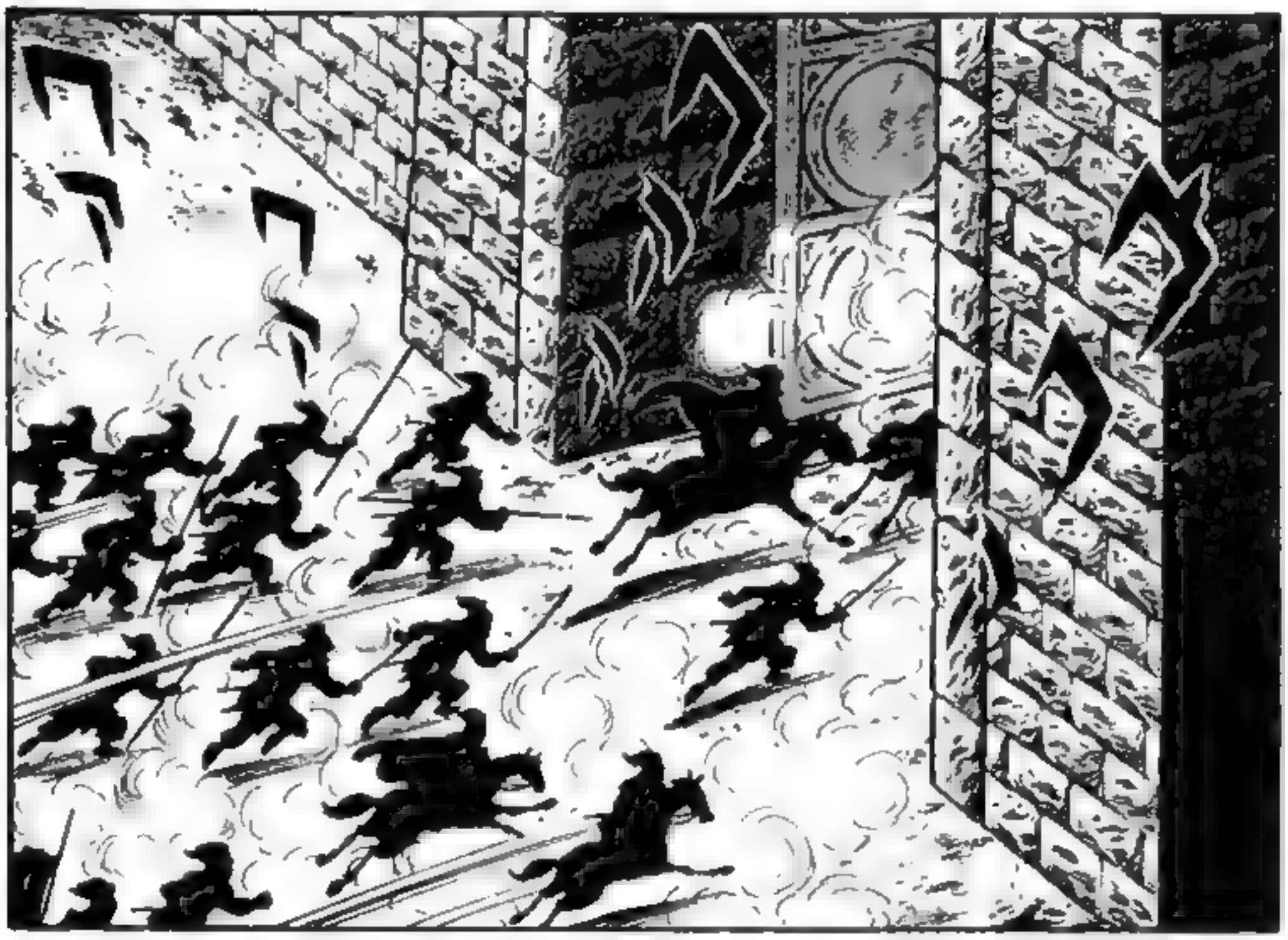




HAHAHA! THIS IS THE EASIEST BATTLE I'VE EVER FOUGHT IN! THEY COMPLETELY FELL FOR THE CHANCELLOR'S BRILLIANT PLAN!
THERE'S NOBODY HERE! LET'S HURRY AND OPEN THE GATES FOR OUR COMRADES!



THE GATES ARE OPEN! CHARGE IN AT ONCE!



YES, NO MATTER HOW WEAK THEIR DEFENSES MAY BE, TO NOT HAVE ENCOUNTERED A SINGLE ENEMY YET IS A LITTLE ODD...

SIR, SOMETHING IS A LITTLE OFF...

AHH!

FIRE!

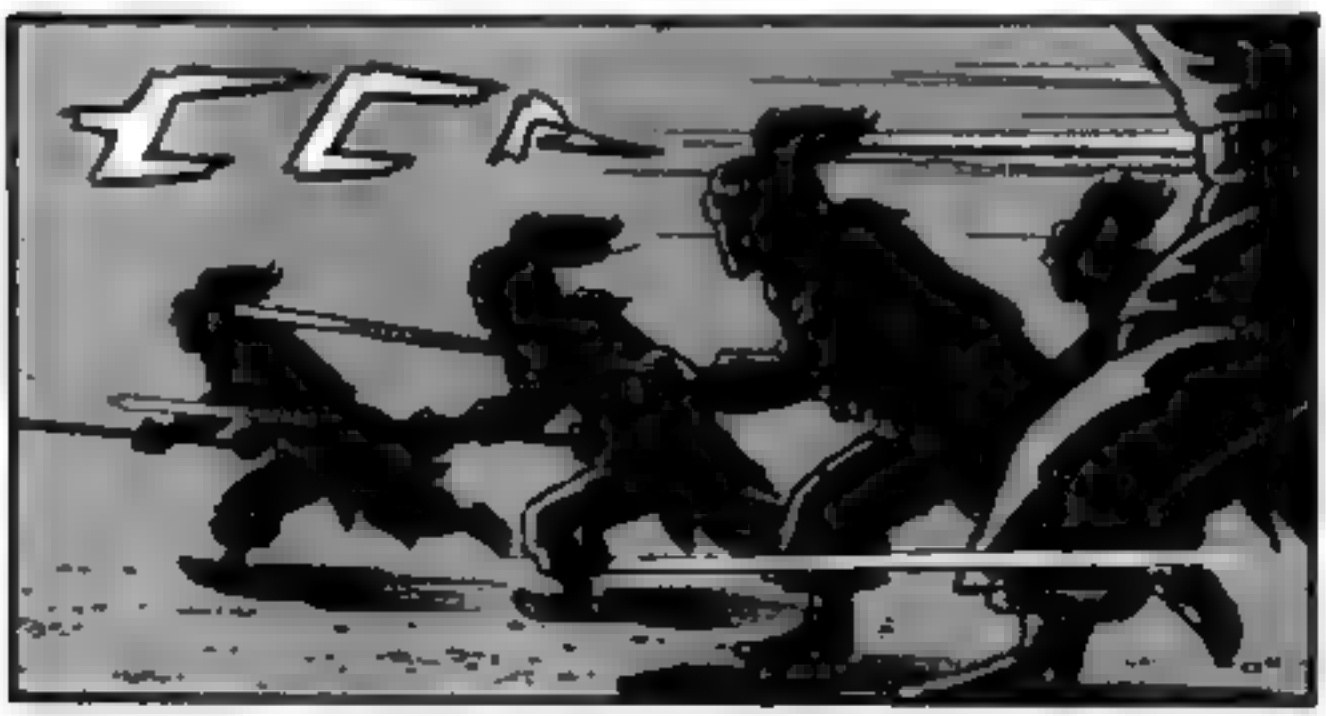
UGH!

AGHH!

GAH!

RETREAT!
RETREAT!

I-IT WAS
A TRAP!



DON'T LET THE ENEMIES ESCAPE!

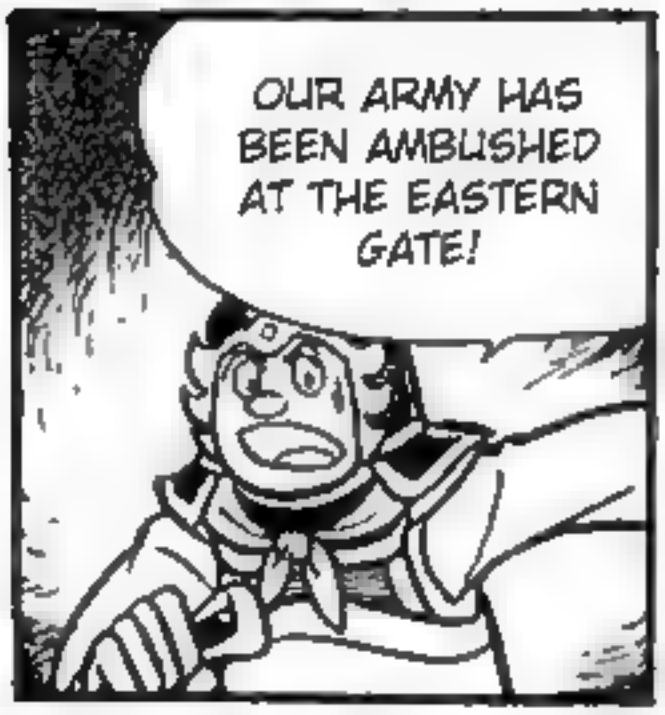
PROTECT OUR LORD!

YES, YOU'RE RIGHT.

WE MUST ESCAPE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, MY LORD!

WHAT IS IT?

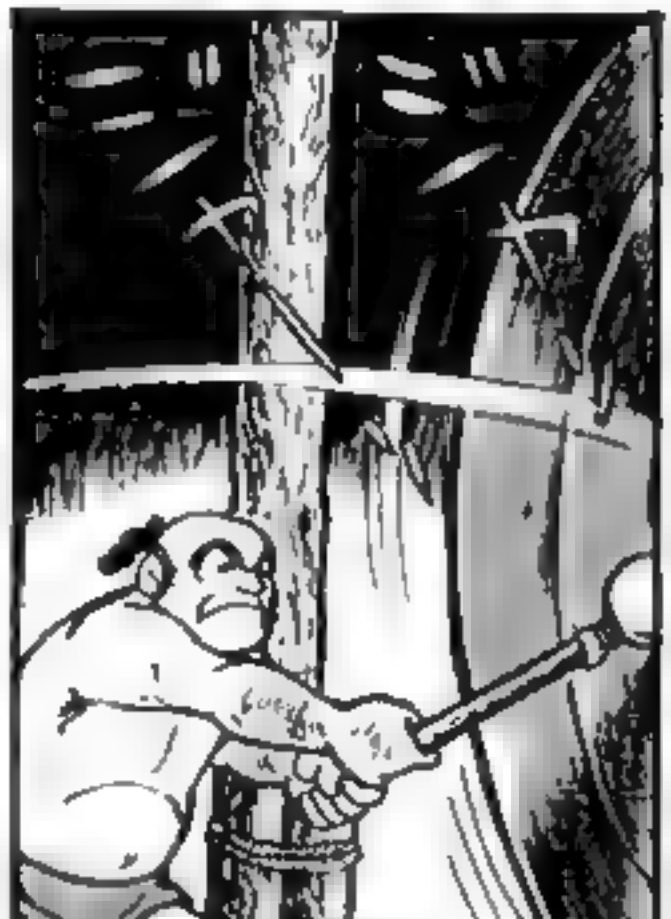
EMERGENCY!


OUR ARMY HAS BEEN AMBUSHED AT THE EASTERN GATE!

WE MUST SEND REINFORCEMENTS AT ONCE!

WHAT!?

ALL SOLDIERS HEAD TO THE EASTERN GATE TO HELP OUR COMRADES AT ONCE!



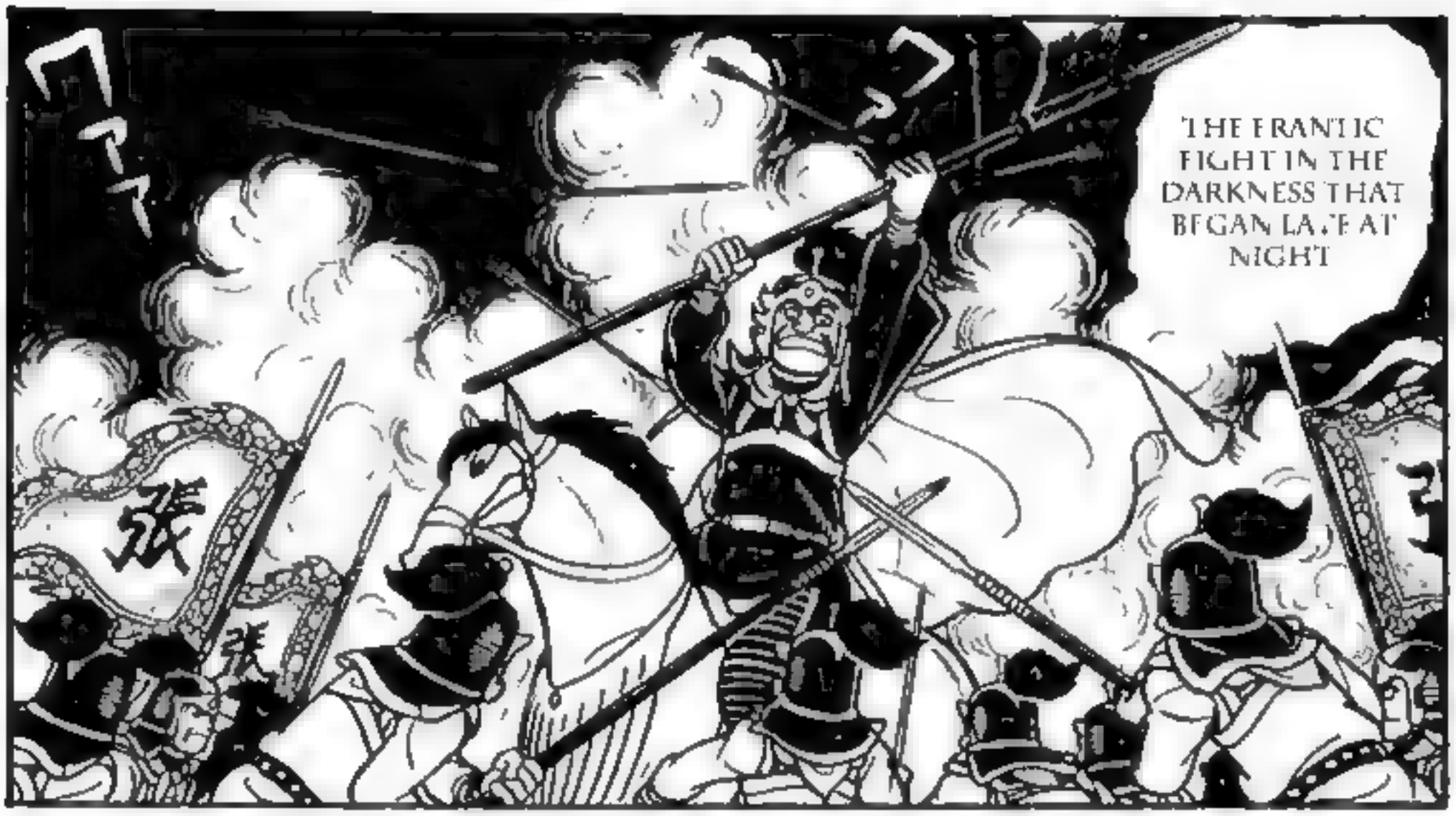
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THAT'S THE SIGNAL TO RETREAT!

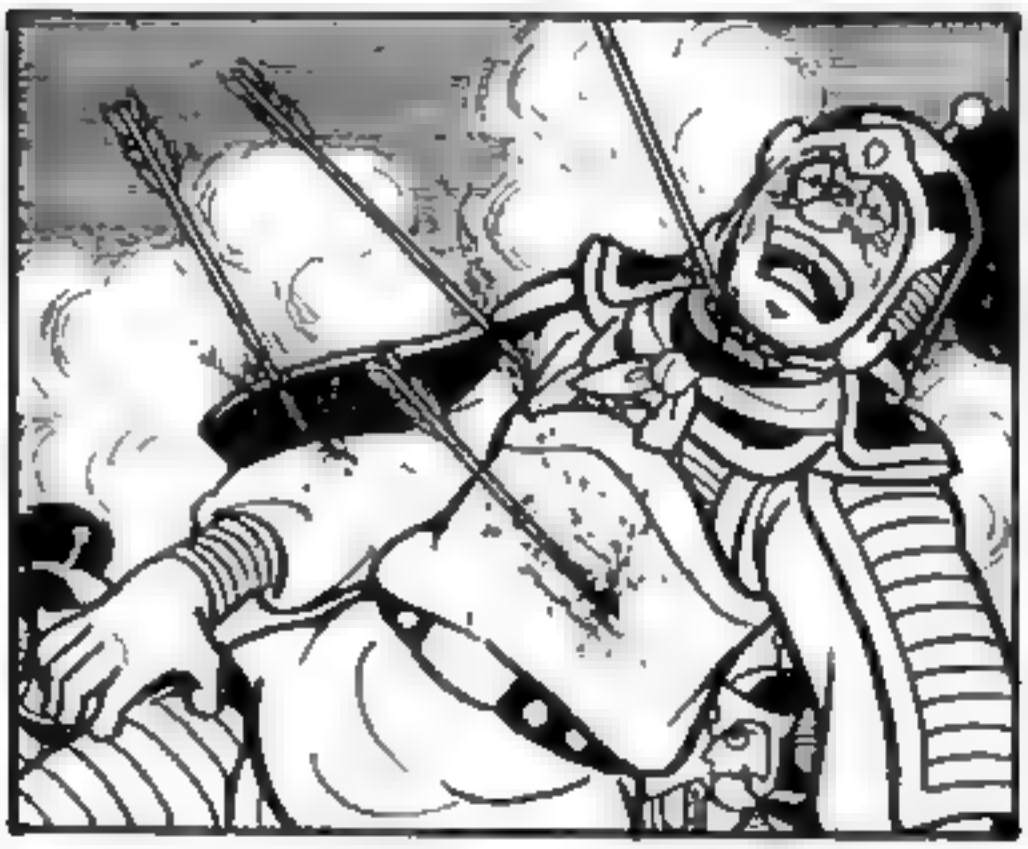
ALRIGHT, OPEN THE GATES! WE SHALL GO OUT TO ATTACK THE RETREATING ENEMIES!

GOOD, JIA XU'S PLAN IS GOING SMOOTHLY.

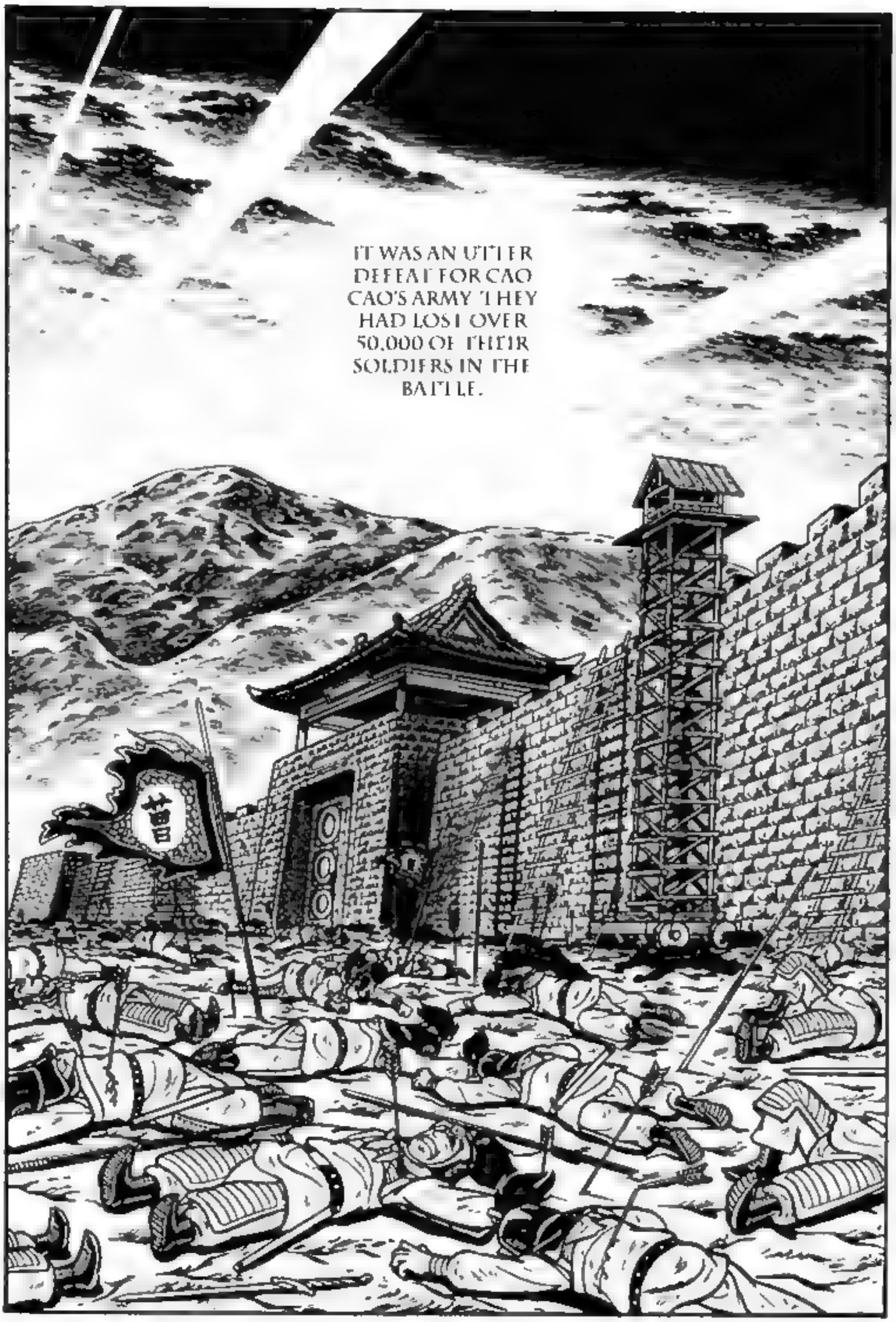
SIR, THE ENEMIES ARE RETREATING!

CHARGE!


THE FRANTIC FIGHT IN THE DARKNESS THAT BEGAN LATE AT NIGHT



FINALLY DREW TO A CLOSE AS THE SUN BEGAN TO RISE


IT WAS AN UTTER DEFEAT FOR CAO CAO'S ARMY. THEY HAD LOST OVER 50,000 OF THEIR SOLDIERS IN THE BATTLE.

CAO CAO'S
FORCES
HAD BEEN
DEFEATED
AGAIN.

AND
TIRED.

THOUGH
THEY WERE
WOUNDED.

THEY HAD
NO CHOICE
BUT TO
RETREAT

WHERE IS THE CHANCE..LOR!?

CHANCE-LLOR!

I AM RIGHT HERE.

HMM?

I BRING SIR URGENT NEWS!

IT SEEMS THAT LIU BIAO AND ZHANG XIU'S FORCES ARE AT ANZHONG TO CUT OFF OUR RETREAT.

WHAT IS IT, MY LORD?

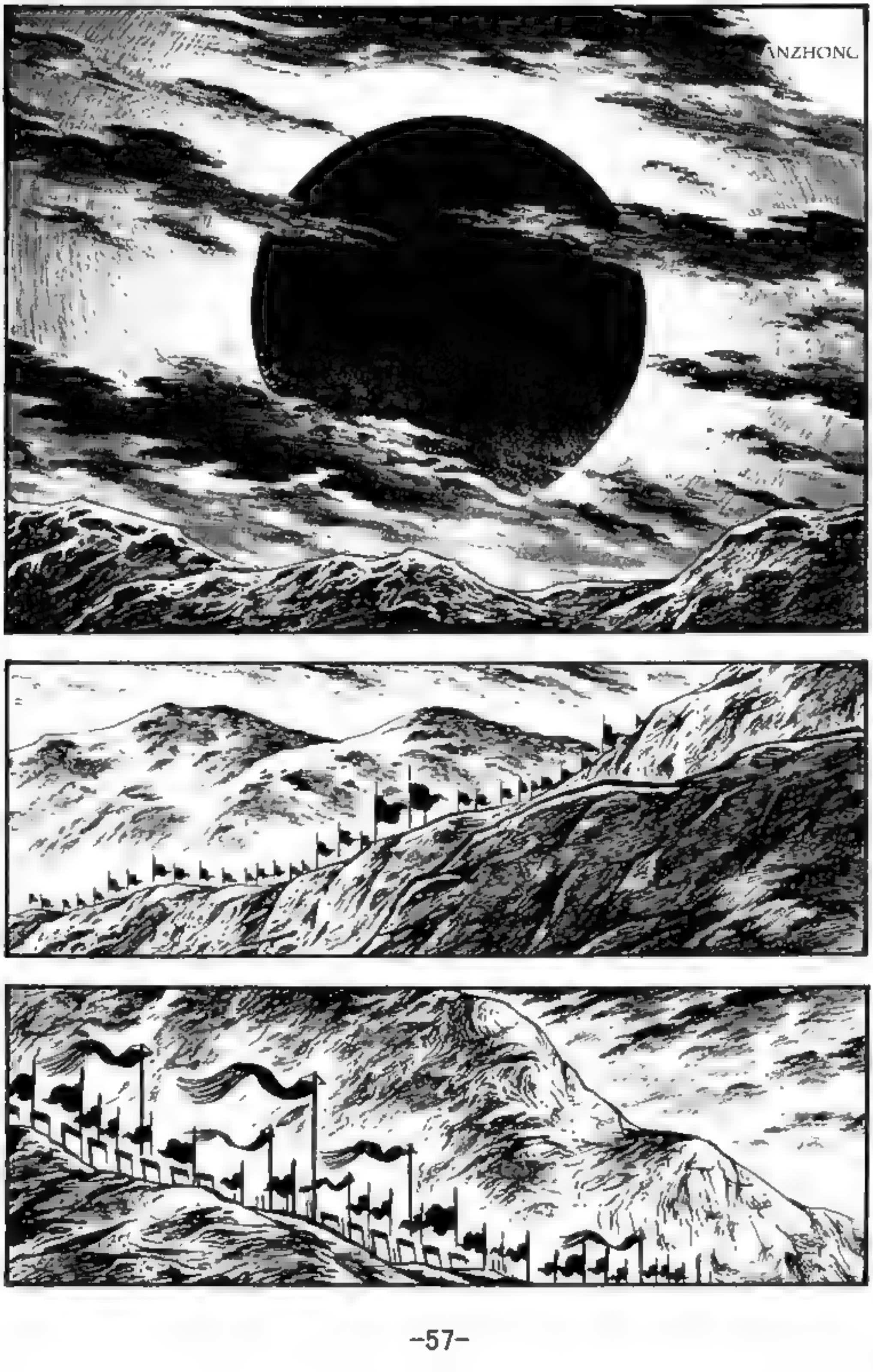
YES...

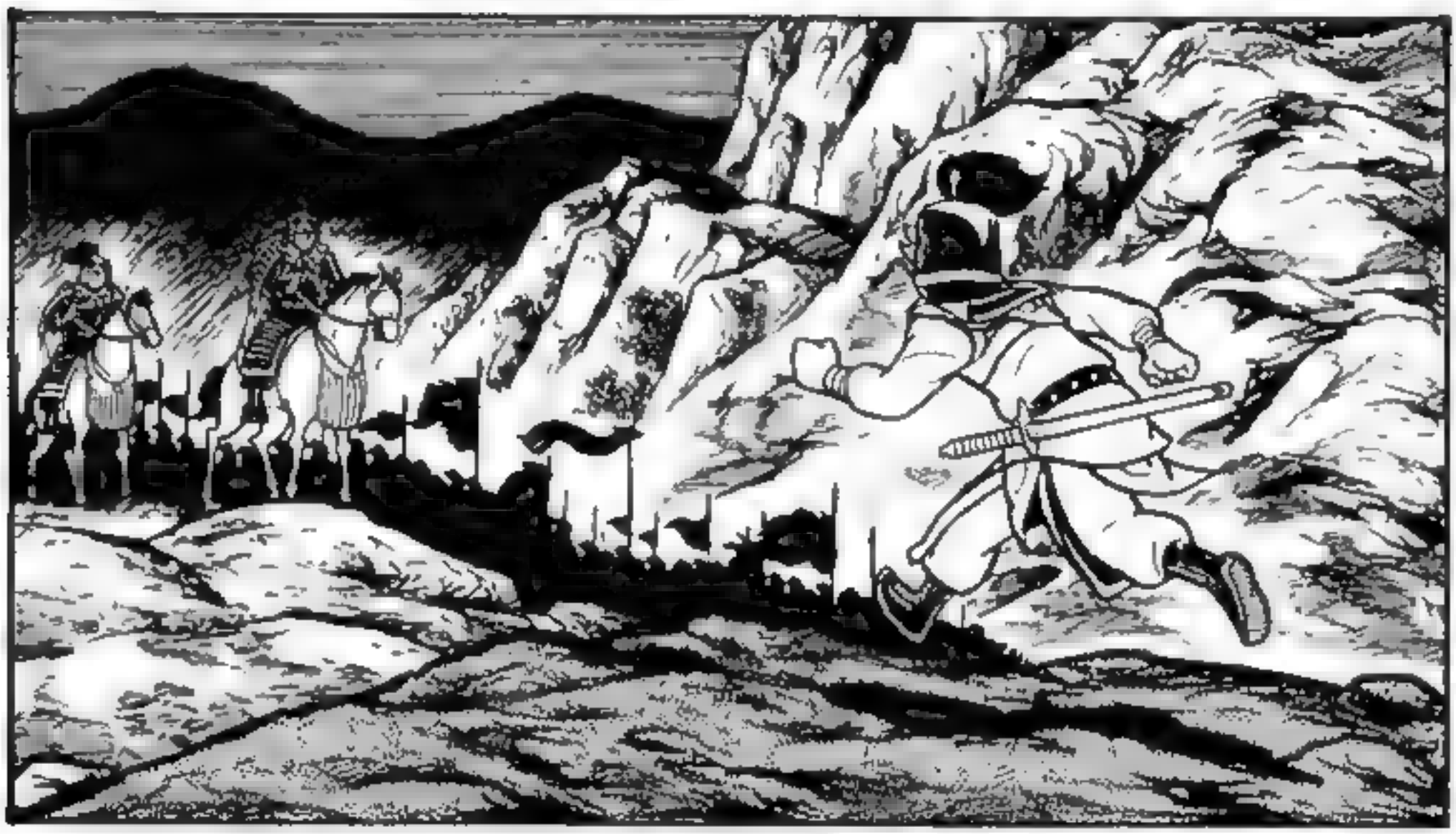
SO JINGZHOU'S FORCES HAVE ENTERED THE BATTLE AT LAST...

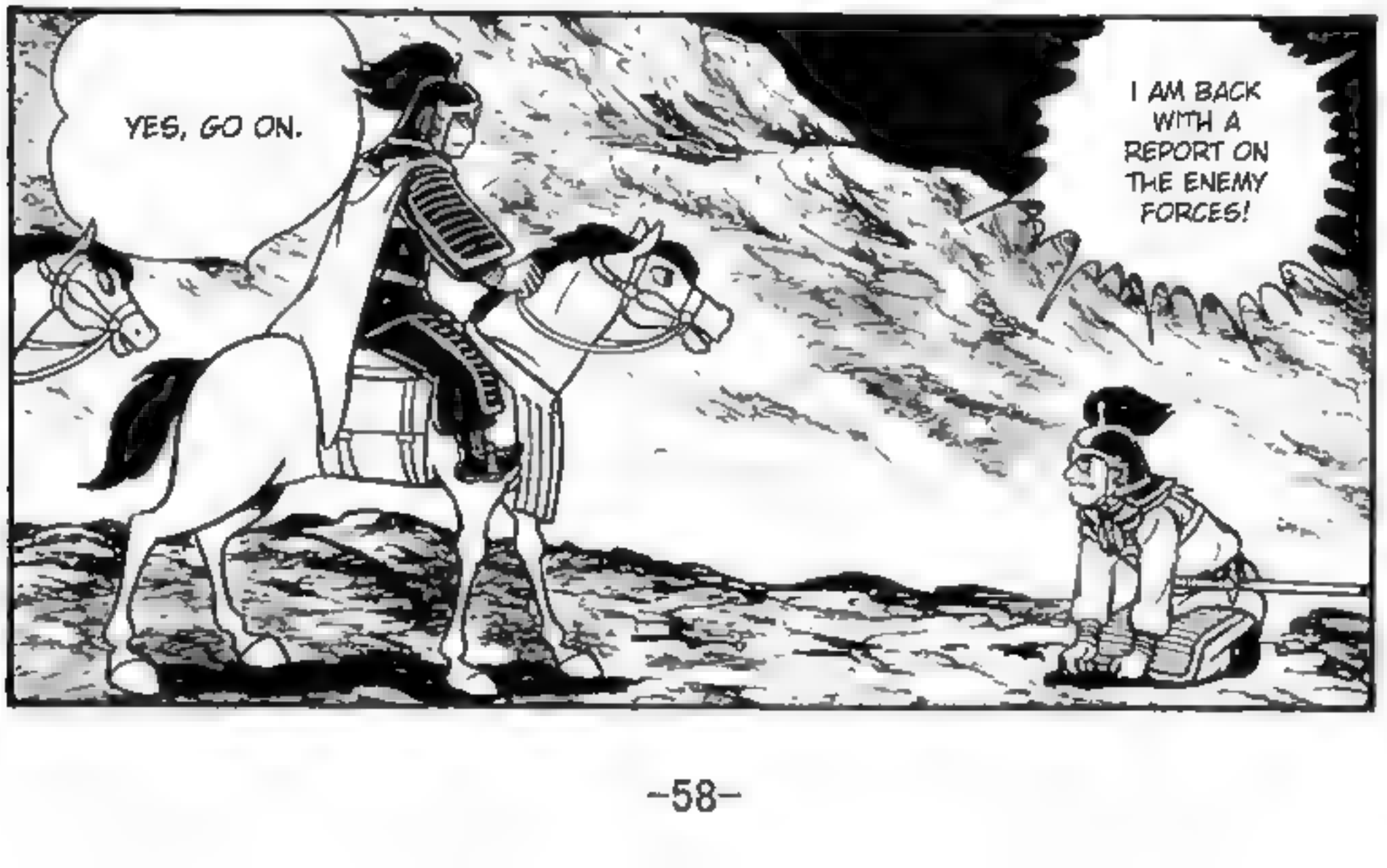
I SHALL BE THE ONE TO FINISH THEM OFF INSTEAD...!

IF THEY THINK THEY HAVE ME COR-NERED, THEN THEY ARE MISTAKEN...

LET US MARCH STRAIGHT TOWARDS ANZHONG!


ANZHONG



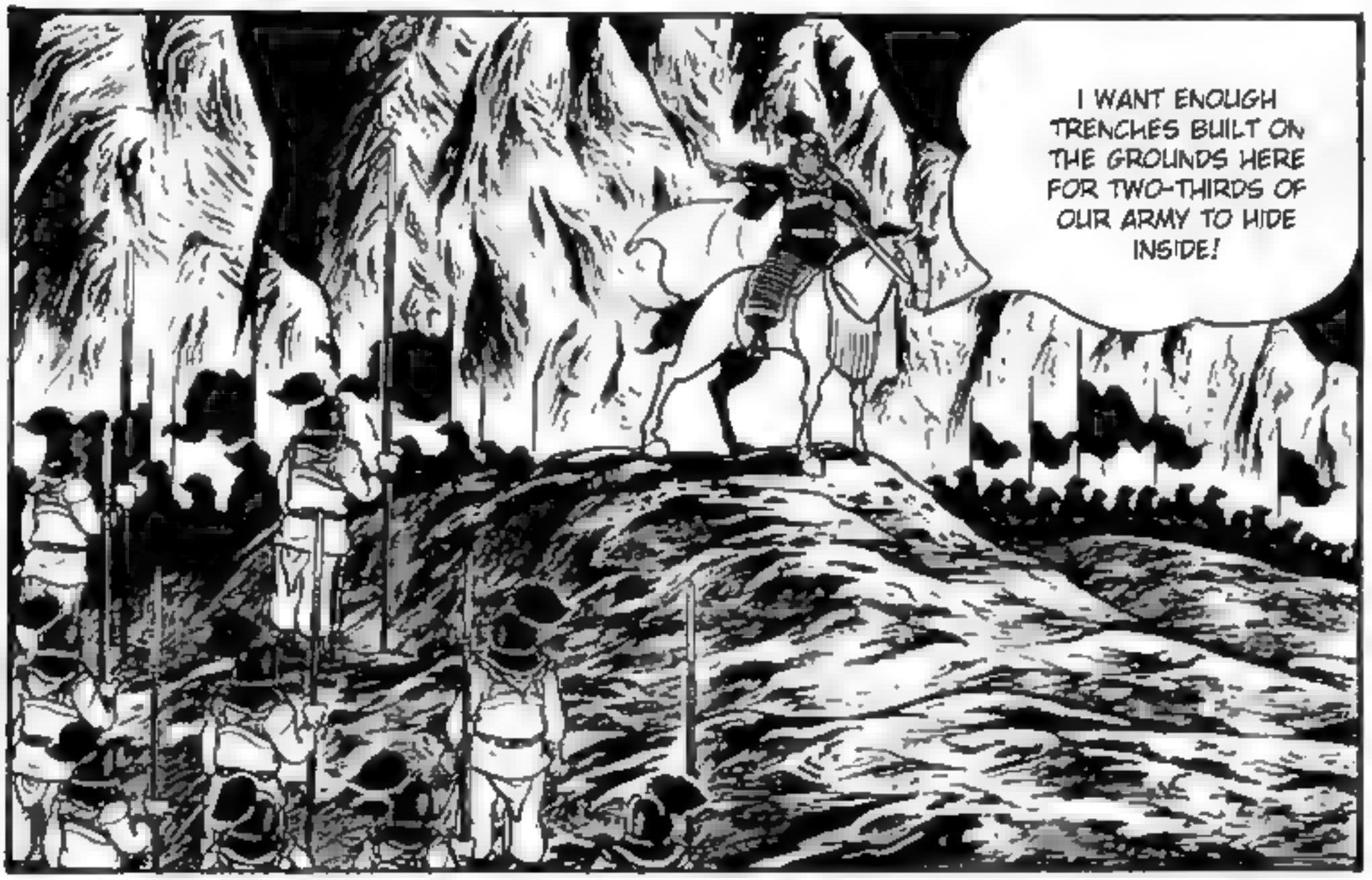

YES, GO ON.
I AM BACK WITH A REPORT ON THE ENEMY FORCES!

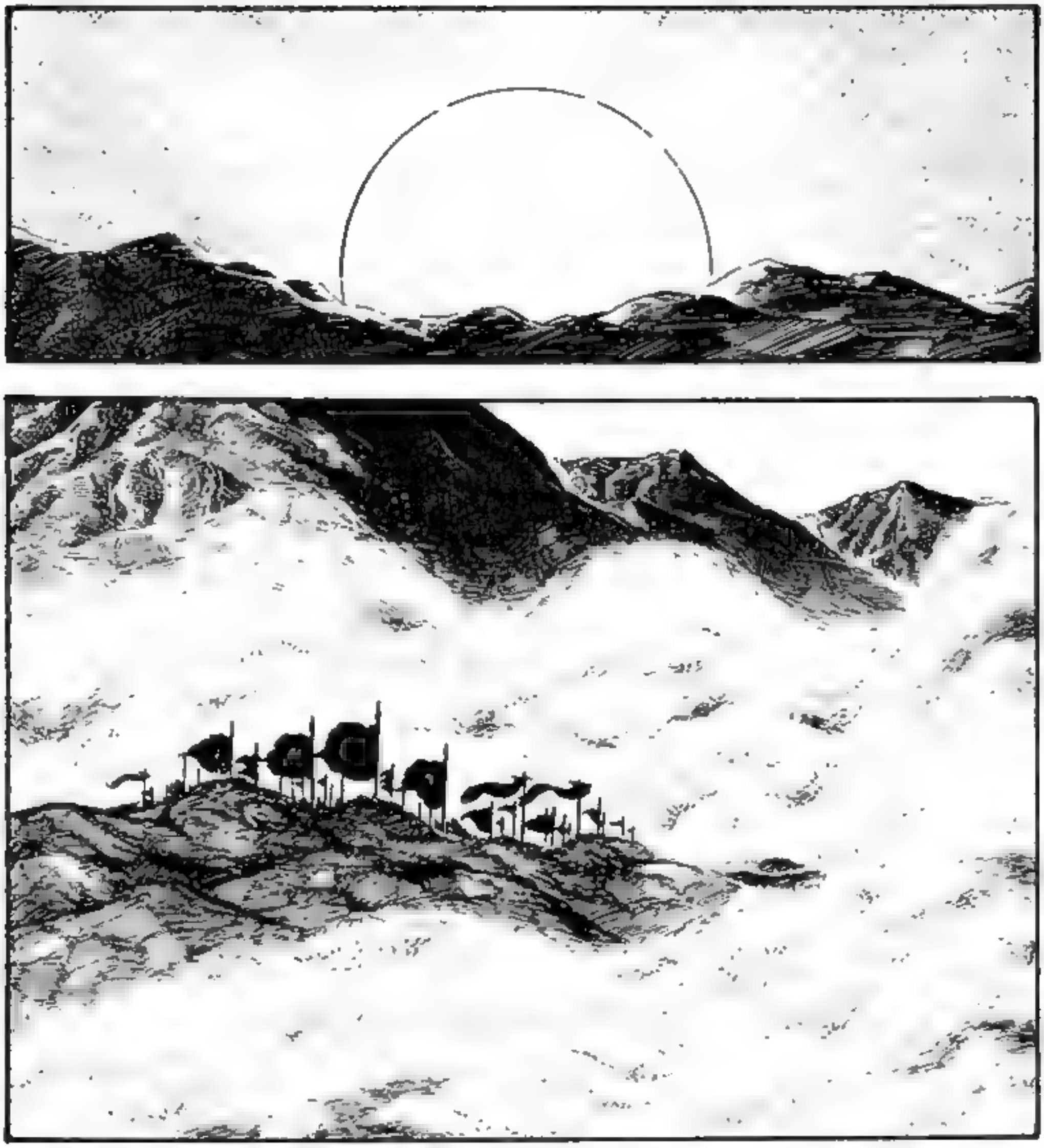
GOOD, WE STILL OUT-NUMBER THEM BY 3 TIMES.

LIU BIAO AND ZHANG XIU'S FORCES NUMBER ROUGHLY AROUND 80,000 AND HAVE SET UP ENCAMPMENTS ON THE CLIFFSIDES.

IF THE ENEMIES ARE USING THE TERRAIN TO THEIR ADVANTAGE, WE MUST DO THE SAME.

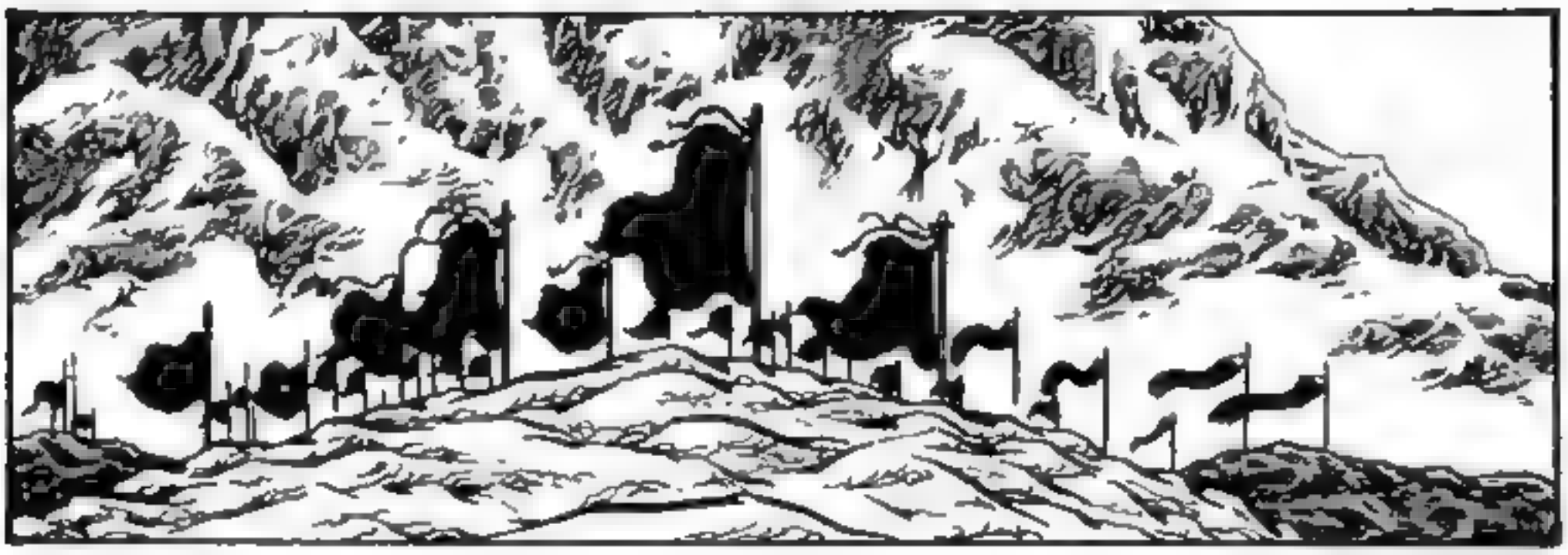
WE SHALL SET UP OUR ENCAMPMENTS UP ON THOSE HILLS.


I WANT ENOUGH TRENCHES BUILT ON THE GROUNDS HERE FOR TWO-THIRDS OF OUR ARMY TO HIDE INSIDE!



SIR, OVER THERE!

HMM?



CONSIDERING THAT THEY'VE LOST 50,000 IN THEIR LAST BATTLE WITH US, THERE ARE SURE TO HAVE BEEN MANY DESERTERS.

WHAT? THAT'S CAO CAO'S ENTIRE ARMY...?

YES THAT'S RIGHT! IT'D BE BETTER IF WE MADE THE FIRST MOVE.
SIR, IF OUR ENEMIES ONLY NUMBER THAT MUCH, THERE IS NO NEED FOR US TO CAMP OUT HERE.

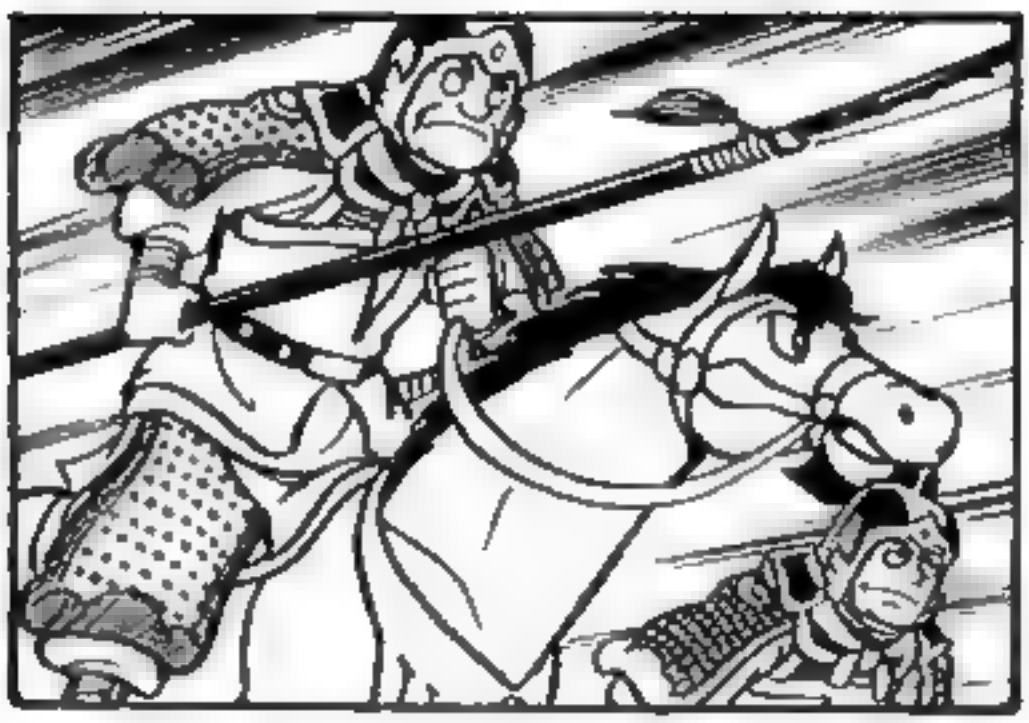
HMM, THAT'S TRUE. I GUESS IT'S IMPRESSIVE THAT THEY EVEN MANAGED TO ARRIVE HERE WITH THAT MANY MEN.

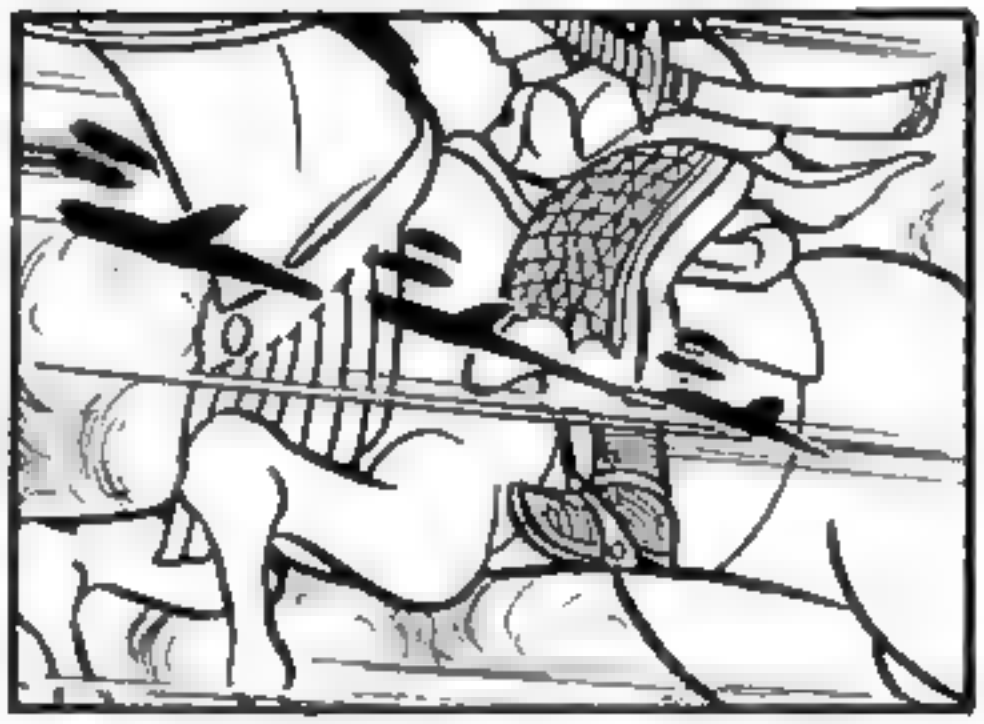
ALRIGHT THEN, LET US ATTACK!

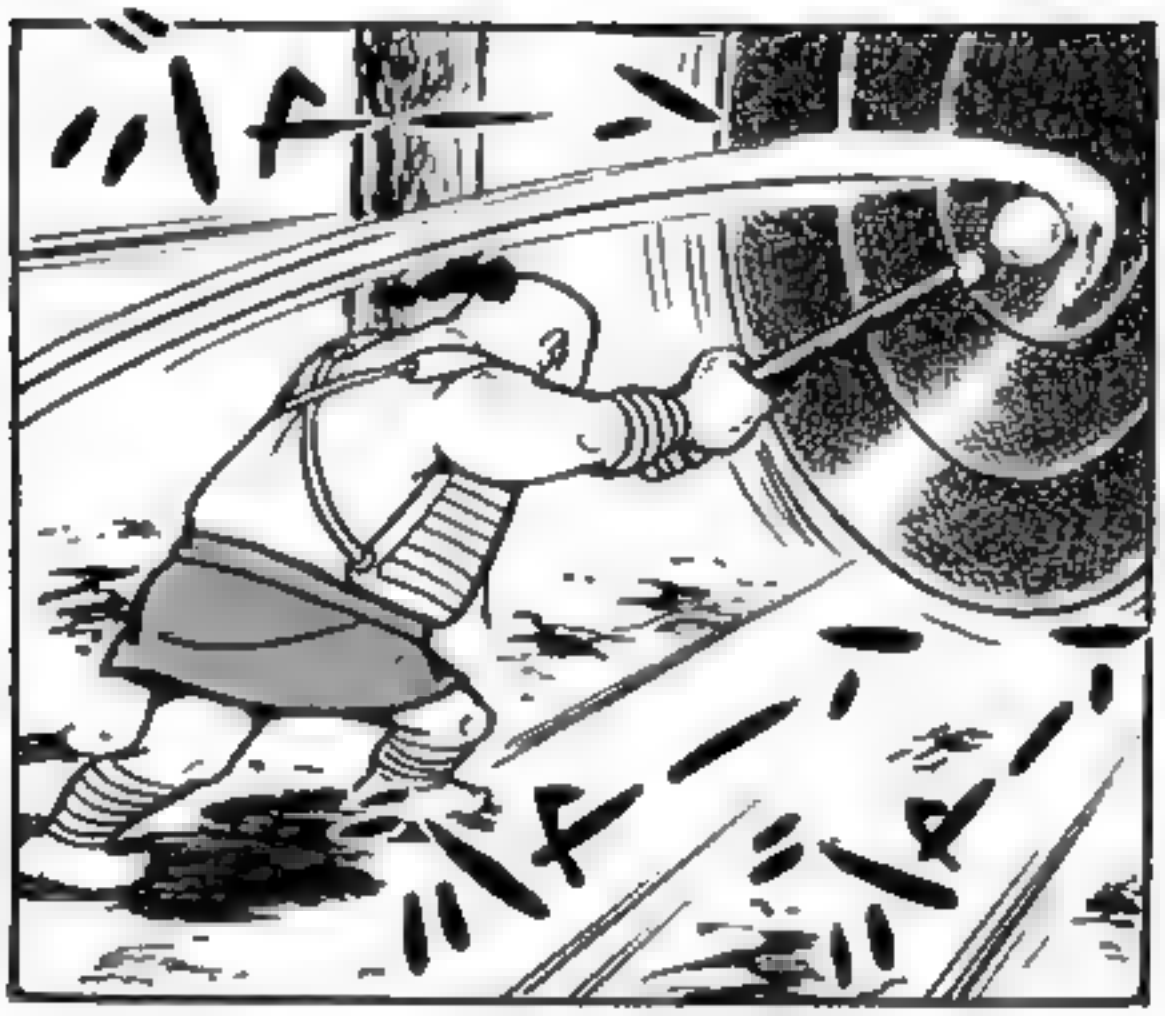
DON'T LET CAO CAO ESCAPE THIS TIME!

MY LORD, THE ENEMIES ARE CHARGING IN AS PREDICTED.

GOOD. LISTEN UP, MEN! DO NOT COME OUT OF YOUR TRENCHES UNTIL THE SIGNAL!







NOW!

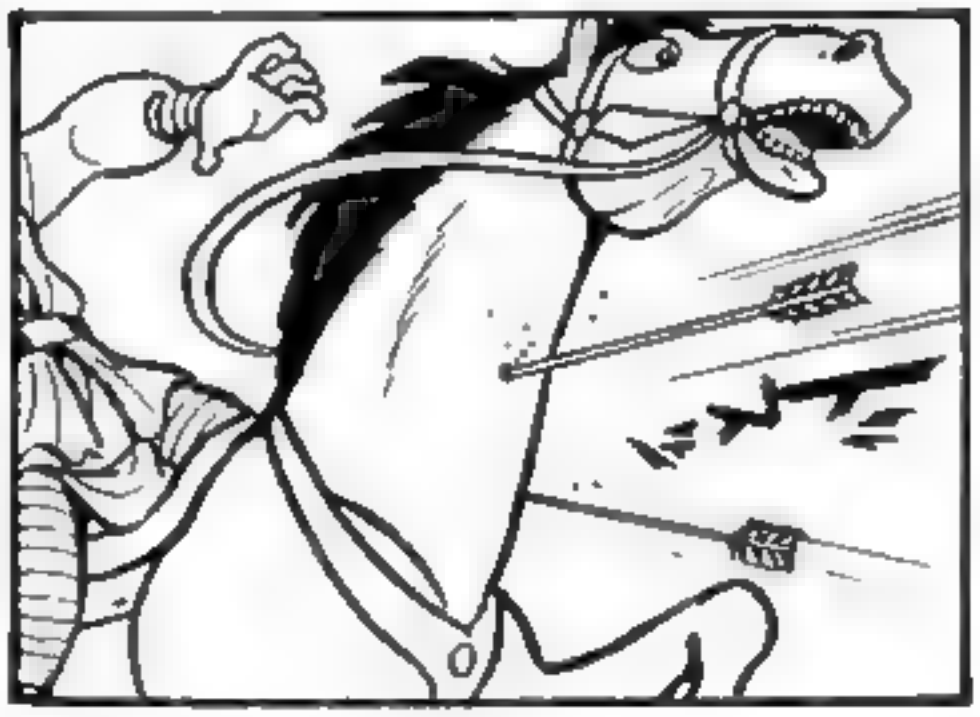
AHI

AHH!

PULL BACK!

W-WE'VE FALLEN INTO A TRAP!

DON'T LET THE ENEMIES ESCAPE! LET US TAKE ZHANG XIU'S HEAD TO AVENGE THE DEATH OF OUR COMRADES!



NOW! ALL UNITS CHARGE IN AND FINISH THEM OFF!

RETREAT!
RETREAT!

WE'RE
COMPLETELY
OUTNUMBERED!

AGHHH!

AFTER HIM! WE MUST TAKE ZHANG XIU'S HEAD NO MATTER WHAT!

WHAT!?

MY LORD, OVER THERE!

IT SEEMS TO BE ONE OF OUR MESSENGERS.

WHO IS THAT?

WHERE IS THE CHANCELLOR!?

I AM RIGHT HERE.

WHAT IS IT!?

CHANCELLOR, IT IS AN EMERGENCY!

WHAT!?

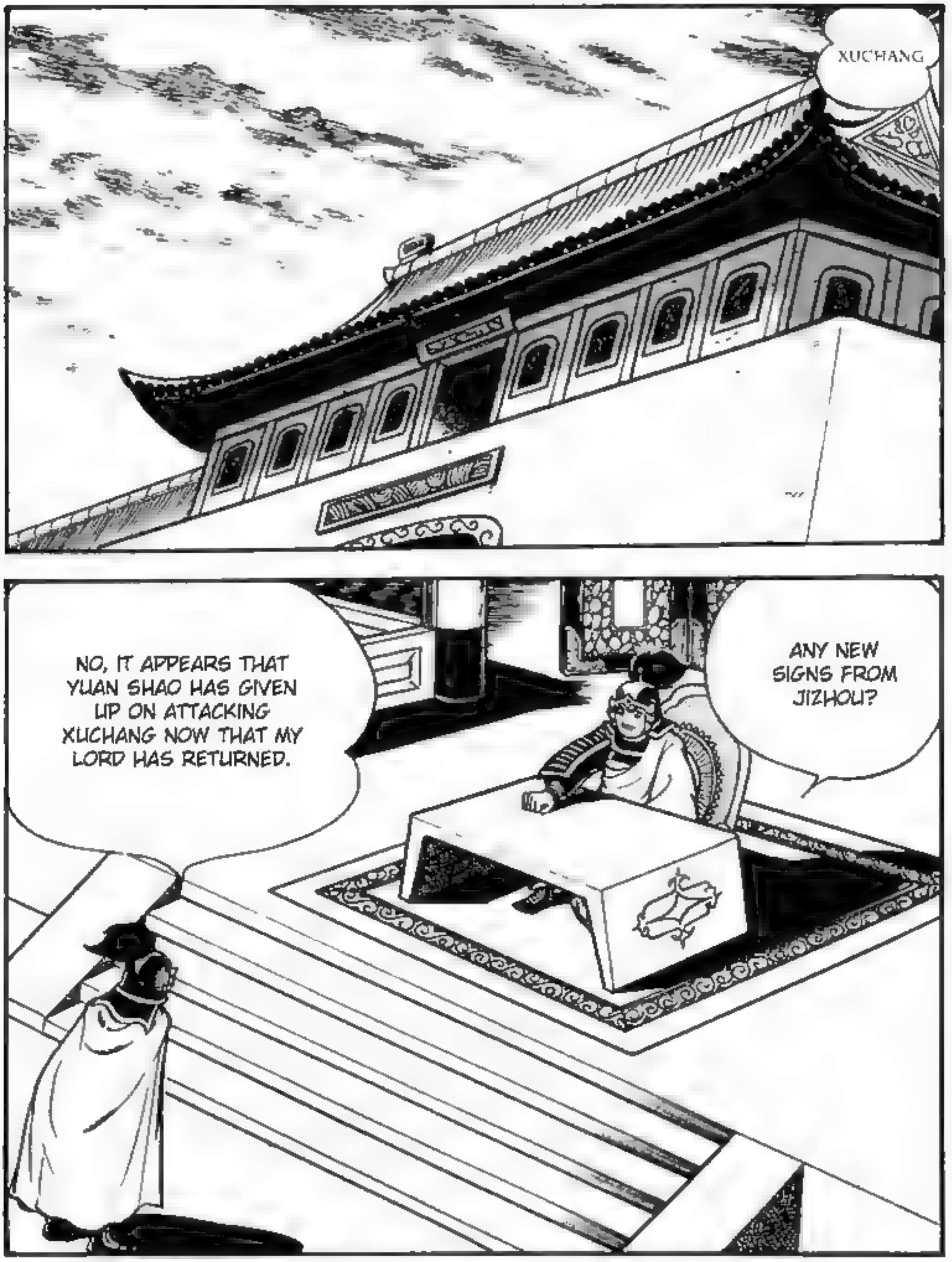
NOTICING THE CHANCELLOR'S ABSENCE, YUAN SHAO OF JIZHOU IS PREPARING TO ATTACK THE CAPITAL, SIR!

YES, NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT ZHANG XIU...

MY LORD, WE MUST RETURN TO XUCHANG AT ONCE!

LIKE A GALE, CAO CAO'S ARMY RETURNED BACK TO XUCHANG WITH THE UTMOST SPEED ONCE AGAIN, CAO CAO'S CAMPAIGN ON NANYANG HAD ONLY YIELDED HIM WITH MUCH CASUALTIES.

DETECTION


XUCHANG
NO, IT APPEARS THAT YUAN SHAO HAS GIVEN UP ON ATTACKING XUCHANG NOW THAT MY LORD HAS RETURNED.
ANY NEW SIGNS FROM JIZHOU?

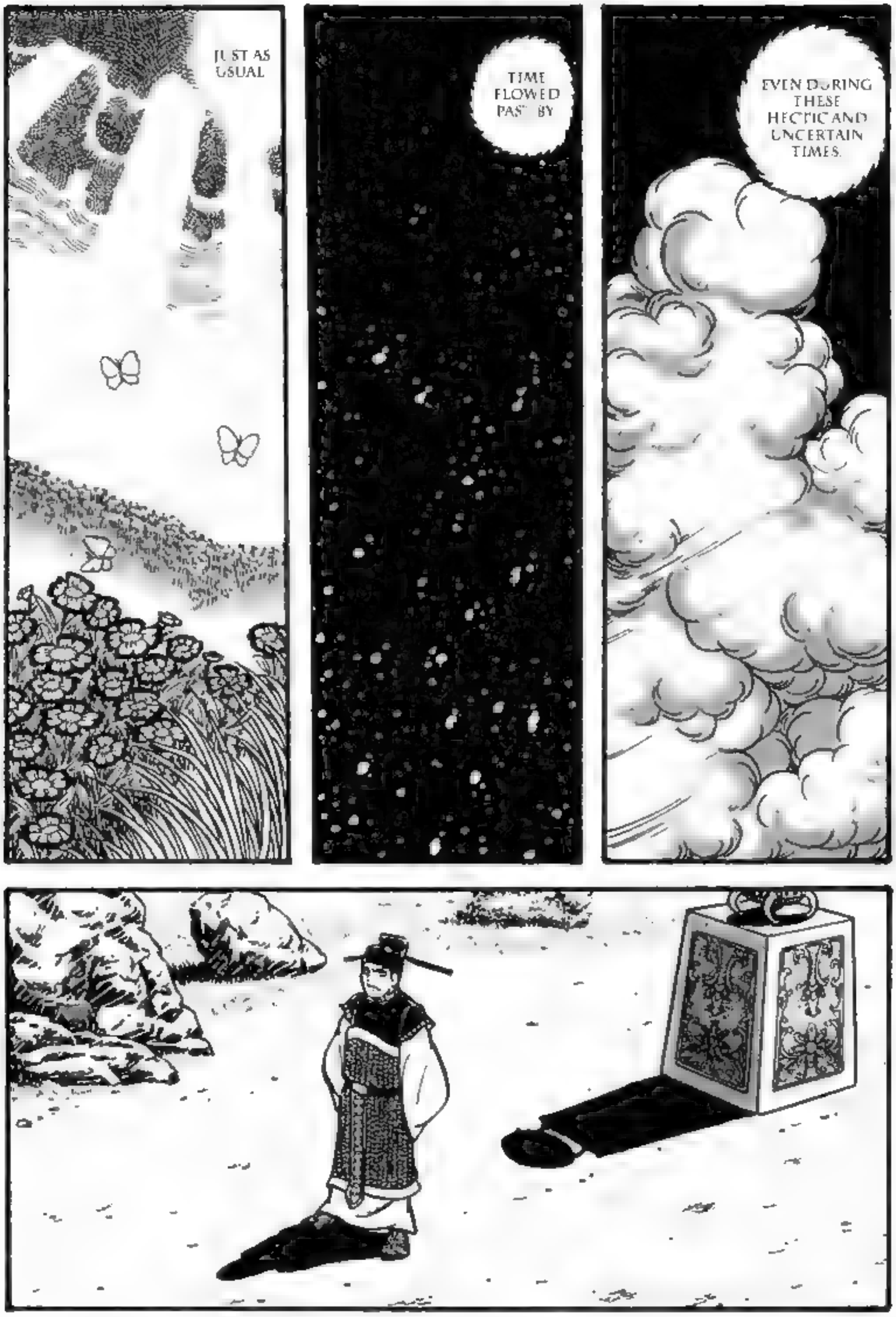
GOOD, THEN XUCHANG SHALL BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN ITS PEACE FOR THE TIME BEING.

WHAT!

BUT LEAVING THE CAPITAL, EVEN BRIEFLY, HAS BECOME MUCH TOO RISKY THESE DAYS.

YES, UNFORTUNATELY, SIR. TO THE WEST IS LIU BIAO AND ZHANG XIU, TO THE EAST IS YUAN SHU, AND TO THE NORTH IS YUAN SHAO. THERE ARE STILL MANY THREATS ON ALL SIDES.

HMM... THE DAY WHEN I CONQUER AND UNITE THESE LANDS IS STILL JUST A DREAM FAR, FAR AWAY.


JUST AS USUAL
TIME FLOWED PAST BY
EVEN DURING THESE HECTIC AND UNCERTAIN TIMES.

LETTER? FROM WHOM?

IT IS A LETTER FROM YUAN SHAO.

I BRING YOU THIS LETTER, MY LORD.

YUAN SHAO...?

WHAT DID HE SAY, MY LORD?

THAT INSOLENT BASTARD ...!

HE DARES PLAN TO ATTACK XUCHANG WHEN I'M AWAY BUT NOW HE SHAMELESSLY ASKS ME TO DO A FAVOUR FOR HIM!?

DOES HE TAKE ME FOR A FOOL...!?

YUAN SHAO HAS ASKED FOR ME TO PROVIDE PROVISIONS AND TROOPS BECAUSE HE WISHES TO WAGE WAR AGAINST GONGSUN ZAN OF BEIPING.

THOUGH I FULLY SYMPATHIZE WITH MY LORD, I BELIEVE SIR MUST BE A LITTLE PATIENT FOR NOW...

IN THE END, LIU BANG'S PATIENCE AND WISDOM ALLOWED HIM TO DEFEAT HIS RIVAL.

HMM...

ALTHOUGH XIANG YU AND THE KINGDOM OF CHU WAS MUCH STRONGER, HE SOLELY RELIED ONLY ON HIS SUPERIOR STRENGTH AND ACTED FOOLISHLY.

DOES MY LORD KNOW WHY LIU BANG, THE FOUNDER OF OUR HAN, TRIUMPHED OVER HIS ENEMY, XIANG YU?

YUAN SHAO IS A MAN WHO DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO ADAPT TO THE CURRENT TIMES AND IS AN INCAPABLE LEADER. COMPARED TO THAT, MY LORD IS A MAN WHO KNOWS HOW TO READ THE TIMES AND IS ALSO AN ABLE MINISTER.

IF MY LORD JUST WAITS A LITTLE LONGER FOR THE RIGHT CHANCE, VICTORY SHALL SURELY COME

COMPARING SIR TO YUAN SHAO, IT IS CLEAR THAT SIR IS MUCH GREATER.

AND JUST WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'M SO MUCH BETTER THAN YUAN SHAO?

MOREOVER, YUAN SHAO IS A PETTY AND NATURALLY DISTRUSTING MAN AND THUS PLACES ONLY HIS RELATIVES TO IMPORTANT POSTS. MY LORD HAS A NATURAL TALENT FOR EMPLOYING TALENTED PEOPLE AND BRINGING OUT THEIR FULL POTENTIALS.

YUAN SHAO IS ONLY COURTEOUS FOR OUTWARD SHOW, BUT MY LORD KNOWS HOW TO BE GENUINELY BENEVOLENT AND TREAT SUBJECTS WITH KINDNESS.

IN THE MEAN-TIME, I SHALL THINK OVER THE MATTER.

T-THAT'S ENOUGH, IT'S A LITTLE EMBARASSING TO HEAR SOMEONE PRAISE ME SO.

THEY MAY COME TO ATTACK XUCHANG TOGETHER IN THE FUTURE

THE YUANS ARE A PROMINENT AND POWERFUL FAMILY, AND THERE IS ALSO THE MATTER OF YUAN SHU.

I NEED NOT FEAR YUAN SHAO, BUT I SHOULD NOT MAKE LIGHT OF HIM.

I MUST NOT FORGET TO KNOW WHEN TO BRAVELY TAKE THE FIRST STEP FORWARD...

IF I SIT STILL FOR TOO LONG, THEY MAY VERY WELL GAIN THE UPPER HAND AND DESTROY ME.

AH, XUN YU.

DID MY LORD CALL FOR ME?

IT IS A MOST DISRESPECT-FUL LETTER.

YES, SIR.
I WANT YOU TO GIVE ME YOUR HONEST OPINIONS ON THIS LETTER FROM YUAN SHAO.

BUT MY STRENGTH IS LACKING COMPARED TO HIM AS THINGS ARE CURRENTLY.
I, TOO, AM ENRAGED BY HIS ARROGANT REQUEST.

YOU THINK SO, TOO?

I AGREE WITH SIR THAT YUAN SHAO MUST BE ELIMI-NATED.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
NEVERTHELESS, I AM STILL DETER-MINED TO ATTACK YUAN SHAO.

I REGRET TO SAY THAT SIR MUST DO NO SUCH THING AT THIS TIME.

GOOD. THEN LET US CUT OFF THE HEAD OF YUAN SHAO'S MESSENGER AND DECLARE WAR...!

YOU DO!?

OF COURSE, MY LORD.

MY LORD MUST NOT FORGET THE TIGER STILL LURKING BEHIND.

THEN ARE YOU TELLING ME TO SIT STILL FOR NOW?

YES, SIR.

YOU MEAN LU BU.. ?

SO I SHOULD WAIT UNTIL THEN...?

YUAN SHAO IS A MAN OF THE PAST. HE SHAN'T BE ABLE TO SURVIVE IN THE COMING NEW AGE FOR MUCH LONGER.

MY LORD MUST WAIT UNTIL THE TIME IS MORE OPPORTUNE.

I SEE. START WITH LU BU, FIRST...

UNFORTUNATELY YES. MY LORD SHOULD COMPLY WITH YUAN SHAO'S REQUEST FOR NOW AND PRIORITIZE TAKING CARE OF LU BU.

AND DIRECT MY FULL ATTENTION TO LU BU.

THEN I WILL SEND A FAVOURABLE RESPONSE TO YUAN SHAO.

AND SO A LARGE AMOUNT OF MILITARY PROVISIONS WAS SENT TO YUAN SHAO.

CAO CAO ALSO APPOINTED YUAN SHAO AS THE IMPERIAL PROTECTOR OF JIZHOU, QINGZHOU, YOUZHOU, AND BINGZHOU

YES, THAT CAO CAO IS MUCH MORE GENER-OUS THAN I BELIEVED HIM TO BE.

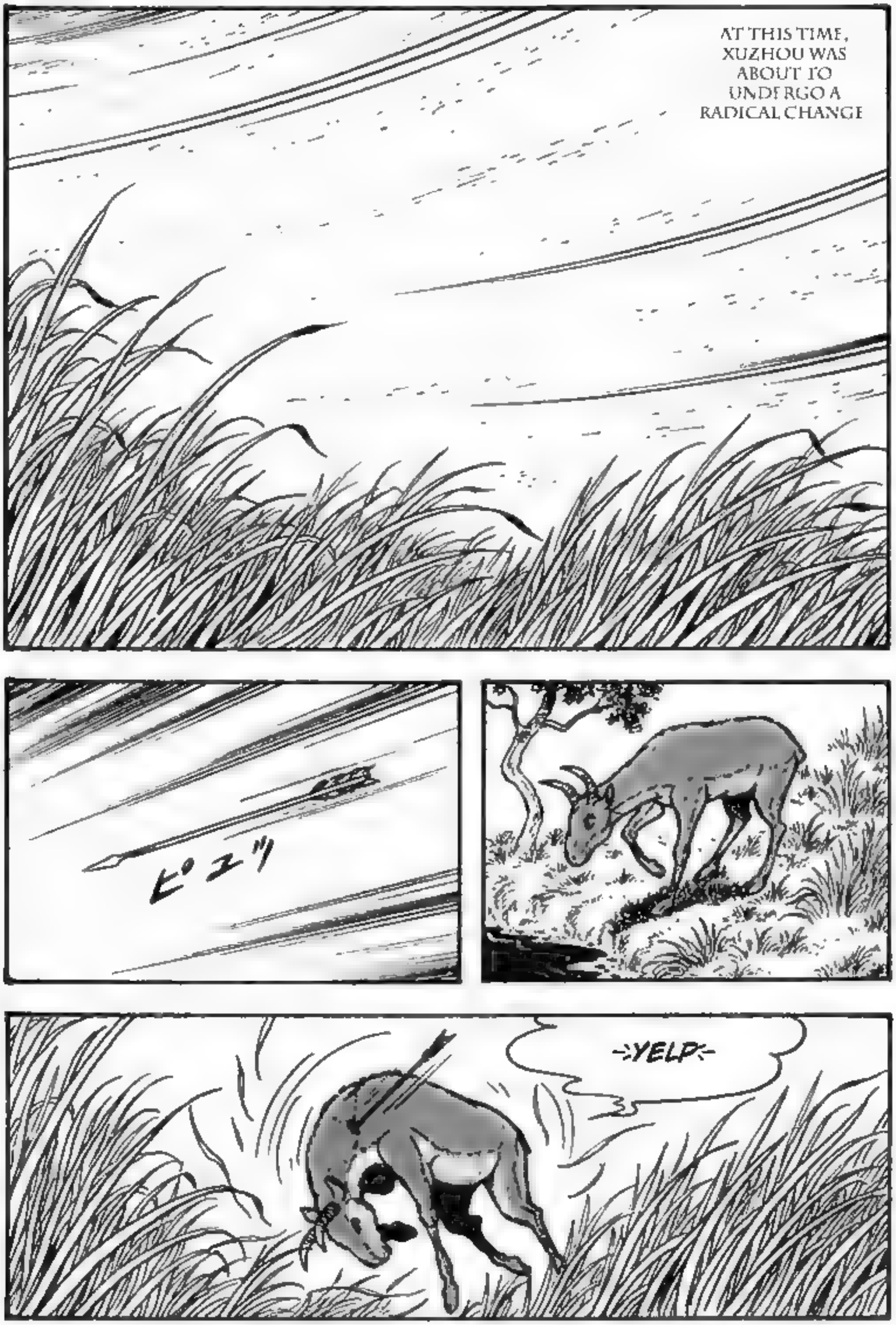
I WAS WONDERING WHAT KIND OF REPLY CAO CAO WOULD SEND, BUT THIS IS QUITE SURPRISING.

IT IS EXACTLY AS SIR SAYS.

YES, SIR.

WELL, NOW WE CAN ATTACK GONGSUN ZAN WITHOUT ANY WORRIES.

YUAN SHAO QUICKLY MOBILIZED HIS TROOPS TOWARDS BEIPING


AT THIS TIME, XUZHOU WAS ABOUT TO UNDERGO A RADICAL CHANGE
ヒュン!!
-:YELP:-

AN EXCELLENT SHOT, SIR.

HMM?

A SPY...?

YES, SIR.

CATCH THAT MAN!

AGHHH!

STRANGER, WHY DID YOU TRY TO RUN AWAY FROM ME?

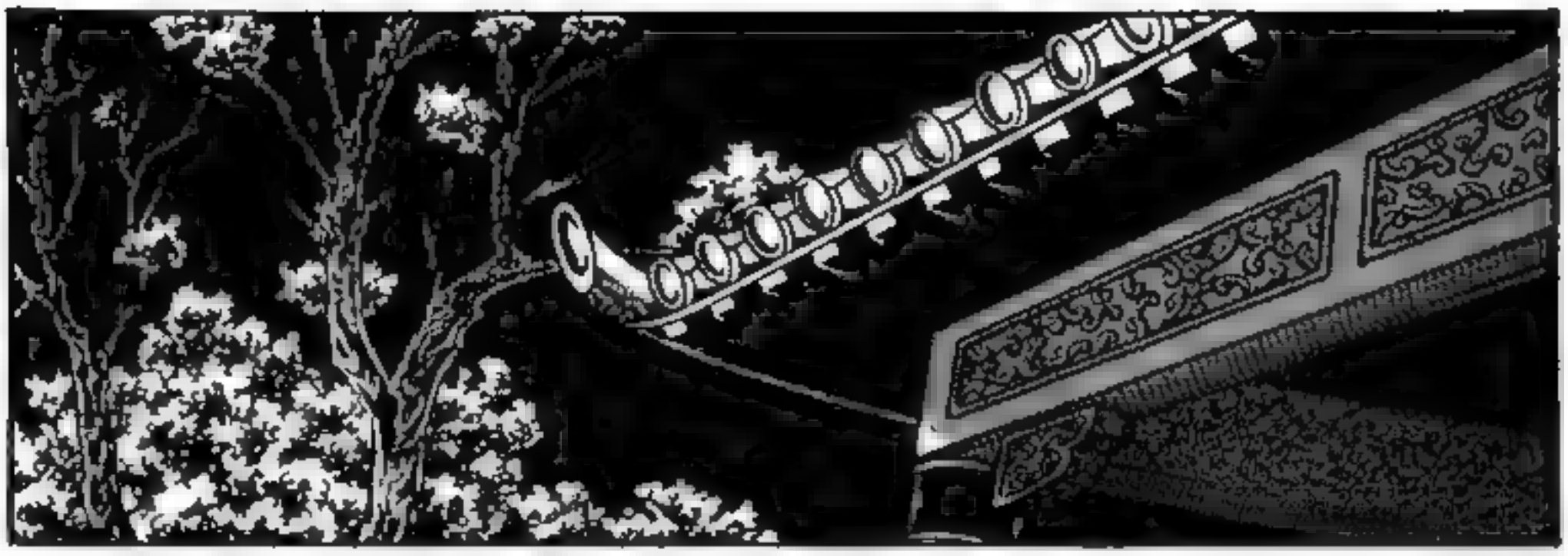
W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

SILENCE! DO YOU TAKE ME FOR A FOOL!? YOUR ACTIONS ARE MUCH TOO SUSPICIOUS.

I WAS NOT RUNNING AWAY, I WAS MERELY TRYING TO AVOID BEING A BOTHER TO YOUR HUNT.

YES, SIR.

TAKE HIM BACK TO MY HOUSE WHERE WE CAN PROPERLY INTERROGATE HIM.



HE IS A SECRET MESSENGER SENT FROM CAO CAO TO LIU BEI.

WHAT!?

GOOD, SO WHO IS HE REALLY?
MASTER, THE PRISONER HAS FINALLY COUGHED UP THE TRUTH.

NO, I DO NOT THINK SO, SIR.
WAS HE CARRYING ANYTHING?

SO CAO CAO AND LIU BEI ARE SECRETLY COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER...?

I SHALL GO SEE HIM MYSELF.

I SUSPECTED THAT YOU WERE NO MERE TRAVELLER BUT TO THINK YOU WERE ONE OF CAO CAO'S SECRET MESSENGERS...

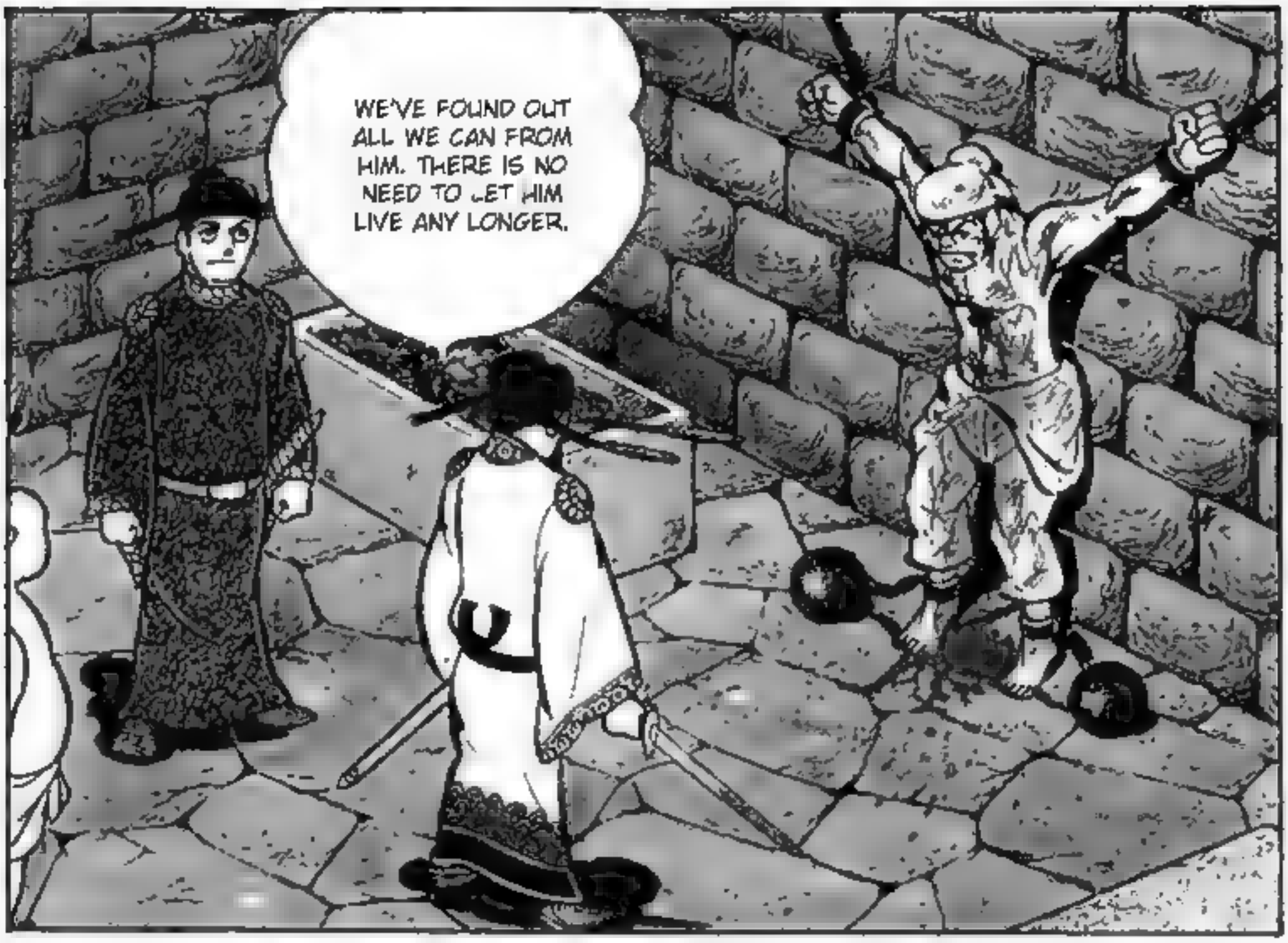
HOW WOULD A MERE MESSENGER LIKE ME KNOW OF SUCH IMPORTANT INFORMATION?

SO WHAT IS CAO CAO TALKING WITH LIU BEI IN SECRET ABOUT?

AND WHERE IS THE REPLY?

I WAS ONLY INSTRUCTED TO DELIVER THE LETTER AND BRING BACK A REPLY. NOTHING MORE.

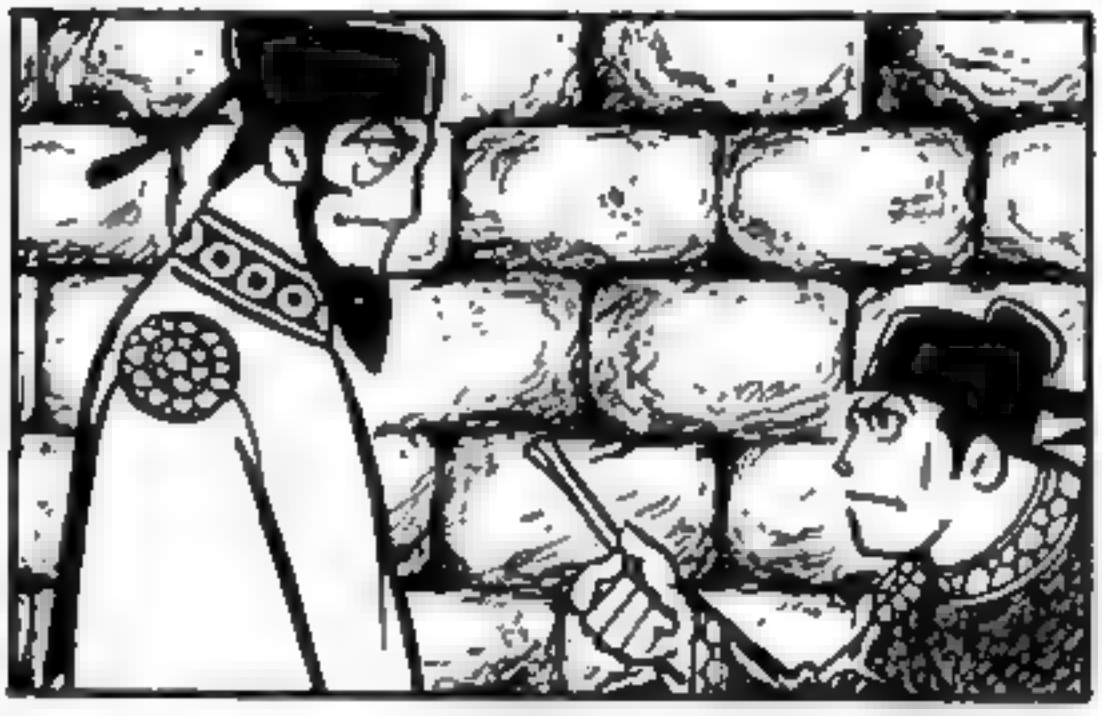
MY OTHER PARTNER HAS ALREADY CARRIED THE REPLY BACK TO XUCHANG.


WE'VE FOUND OUT ALL WE CAN FROM HIM. THERE IS NO NEED TO LET HIM LIVE ANY LONGER.

YES, SIR.
SEARCH HIS CLOTHES ONE MORE TIME, JUST TO BE SAFE.

MASTER, THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING HIDDEN INSIDE.

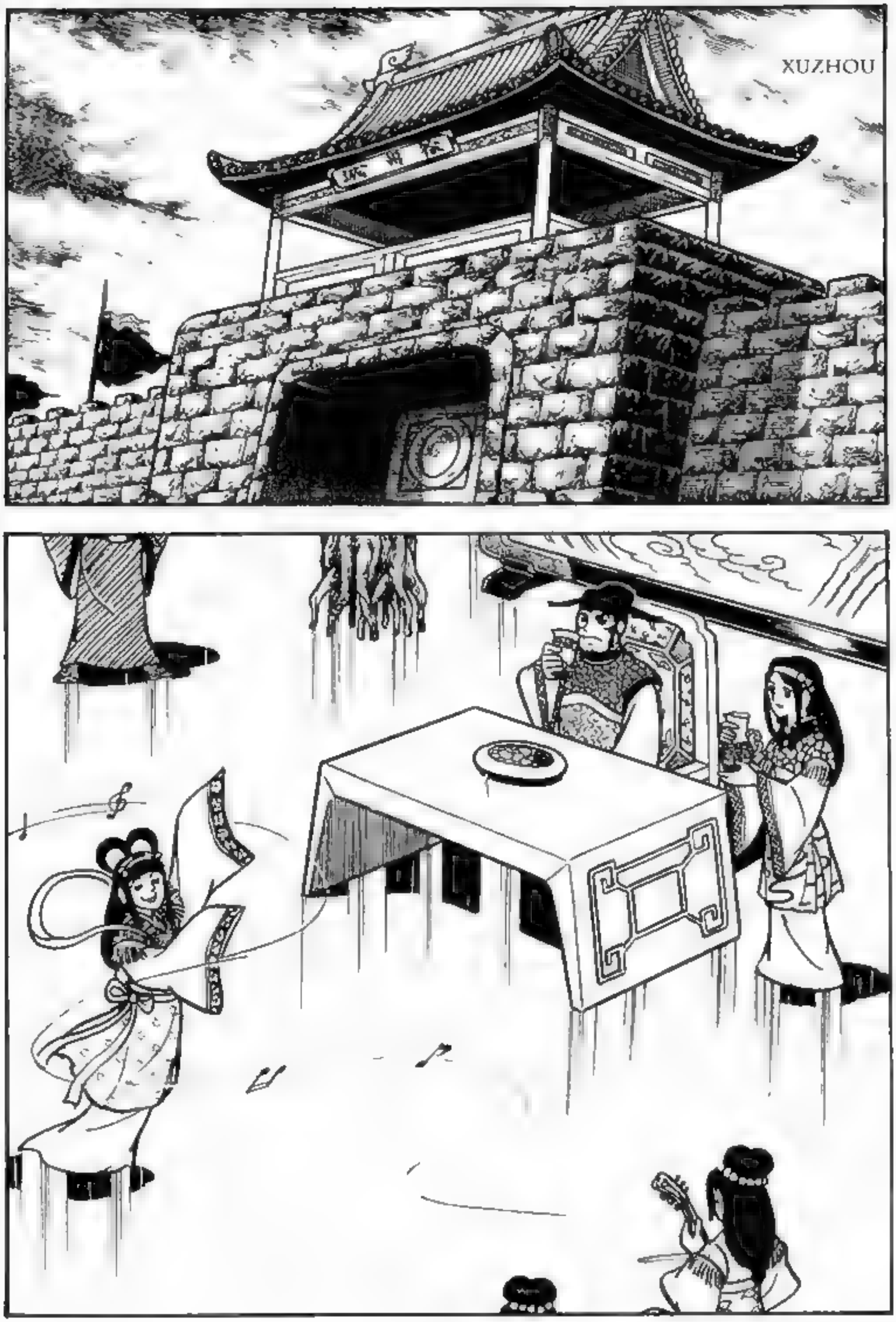
HMM?



IT'S A LETTER!

AHH!

THIS IS NO ORDINARY LETTER...


XUZHOU

THAT'S ENOUGH!

NOW LEAVE!

COMPARED TO HOW DIAO CHAN USED TO DANCE, YOU'RE ALL PATHETIC!

MY LORD!

CAO CAO AND LIU BEI ARE SECRETLY PLOTTING TO KILL SIR.

WHAT!?

WHAT IS IT!?

MY LORD, IT'S AN EMER-GENCY!

THIS IS THE LETTER THAT I FOUND FROM A SPY CAPTURED YESTERDAY.

YUAN SHAO IS NOW DISTRACTED WITH GONGSUN ZAN, AND LU BU HAS YET TO MEND HIS RELATIONS WITH YUAN SHU. NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO BRING DOWN LU BU...

YES, IT SEEMS BOTH CAO CAO AND LIU BEI ARE CURRENTLY TAKING MEASURES TO ELIMINATE MY LORD.

THIS IS...

NNGHHH...! HOW DARE THAT LIU BEI...!

YES, SIR.

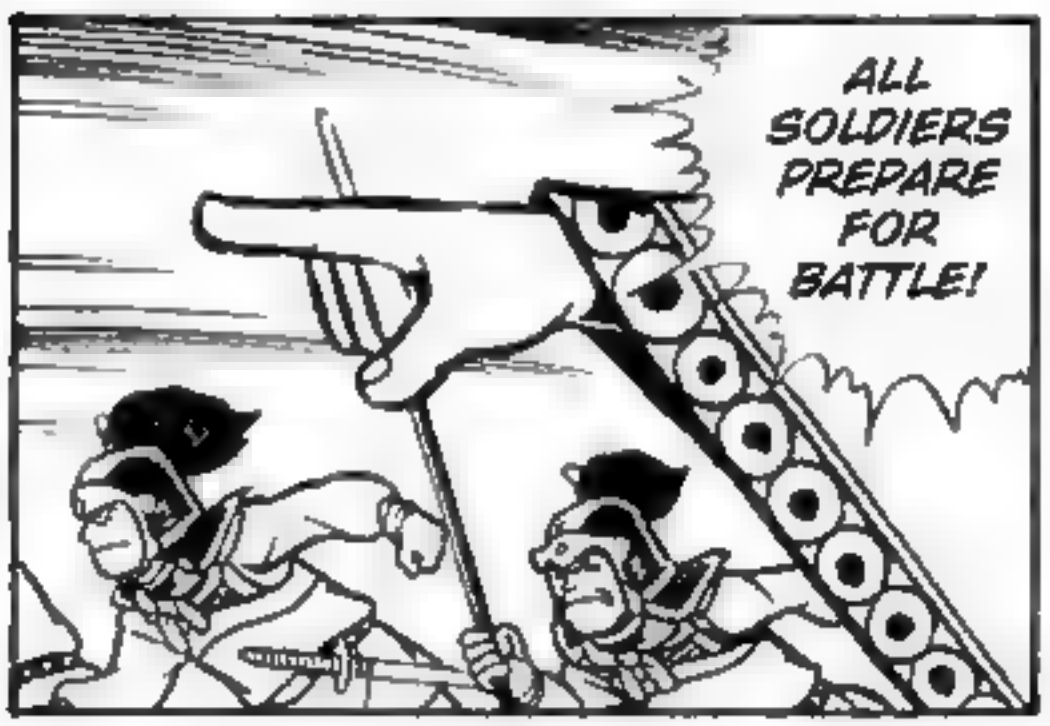
UNFORGIVABLE! MOBILIZE THE TROOPS TO ATTACK XIAOPEI AT ONCE!

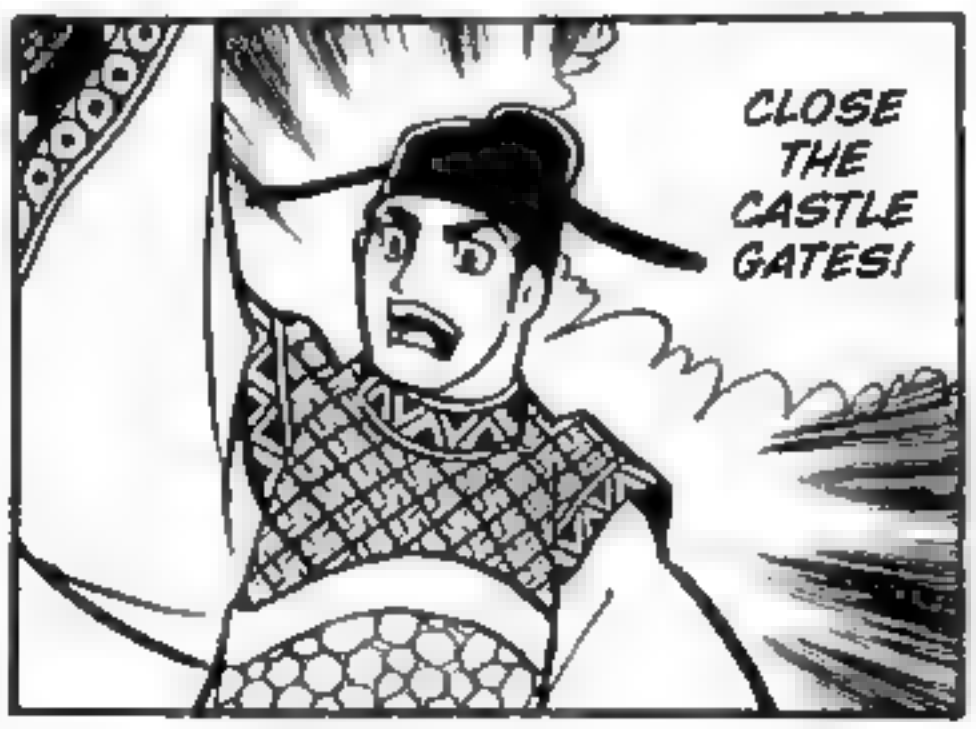
XIAOPEI

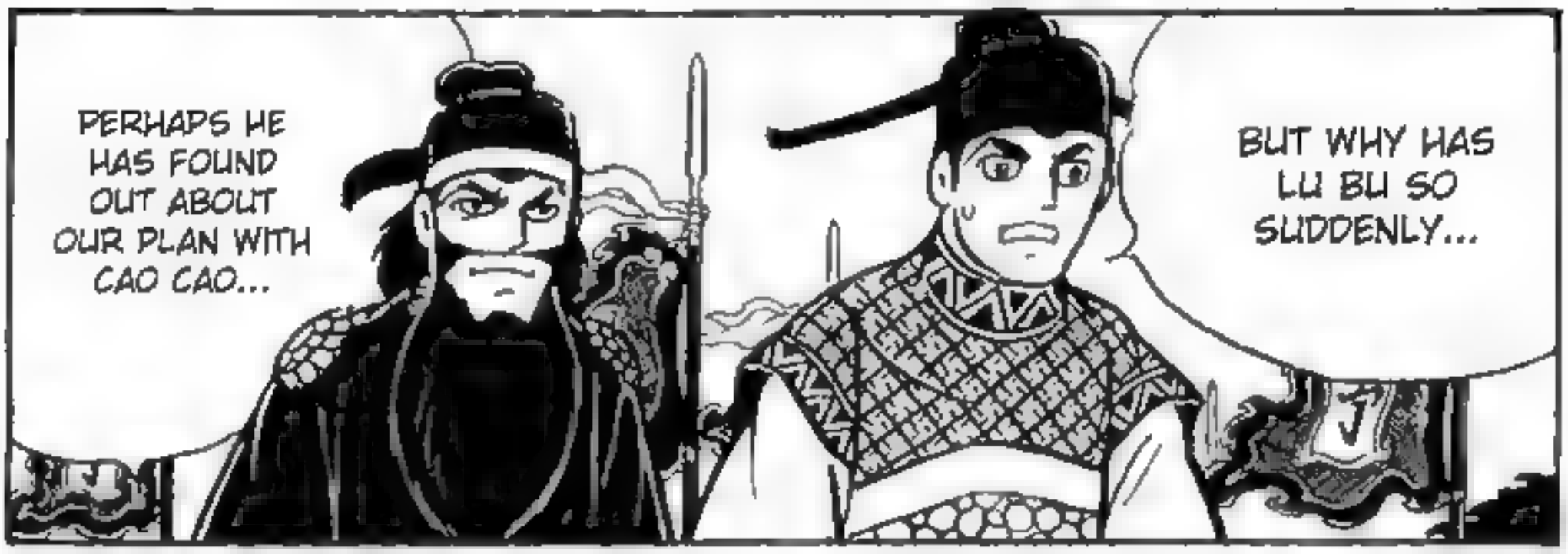
WHAT!

MY LORD, LU BU'S ARMY IS HEADED HERE TO ATTACK AS WE SPEAK!

AHH!


ALL SOLDIERS PREPARE FOR BATTLE!


CLOSE THE CASTLE GATES!


PERHAPS HE HAS FOUND OUT ABOUT OUR PLAN WITH CAO CAO...
BUT WHY HAS LU BU SO SUDDENLY...

YOU MAY BE RIGHT...

SEND A REQUEST TO CAO CAO FOR REINFORCEMENTS AT ONCE!

YES.

WE MUST DO OUR BEST TO HOLD OUT UNTIL OUR REIN-FORCEMENTS ARRIVE...

DAMN IT! JUST WHEN DID THOSE TWO SECRETLY JOIN HANDS TOGETHER...!?

I MUST COME UP WITH SOME SORT OF PLAN...

IF IT WAS JUST LIU BEI, I WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY BUT FIGHTING CAO CAO AS WELL CHANGES ENTIRELY EVERYTHING...

Oh, the scent of katsura tree flowers which travels a thousand li~

And the bees that come flying,
from a thousand li away,
As they look upon the flowers,
they buzz about here and there.

unfold,
little by little.

As the bees
find their match
and fly inside,
the petals of the
kutsura flowers

HMM?

I'M SO EMBAR-RASSED!

FATHER!

YES.

MY LORD'S DAUGHTER HAS GROWN INTO A BEAUTIFUL LADY.

MY DAUGHTER ...

HUAINAN
YES, YOUR HIGHNESS.
HMM? A MESSENGER FROM LU BU?

HE WISHES TO RENEW THE OFFER TO HAVE HIS DAUGHTER MARRY YOUR HIGHNESS'S SON.

AND WHAT DOES HE WANT?

A MARRIAGE BETWEEN MY SON AND HIS DAUGHTER? HMM...

BUT YOUR HIGHNESS, LU BU IS A RATHER DANGEROUS MAN.

GOOD, IF LU BU AND I WERE TO BECOME RELATED, THEN I CAN COUNT ON HIS HELP TO ATTACK CAO CAO.

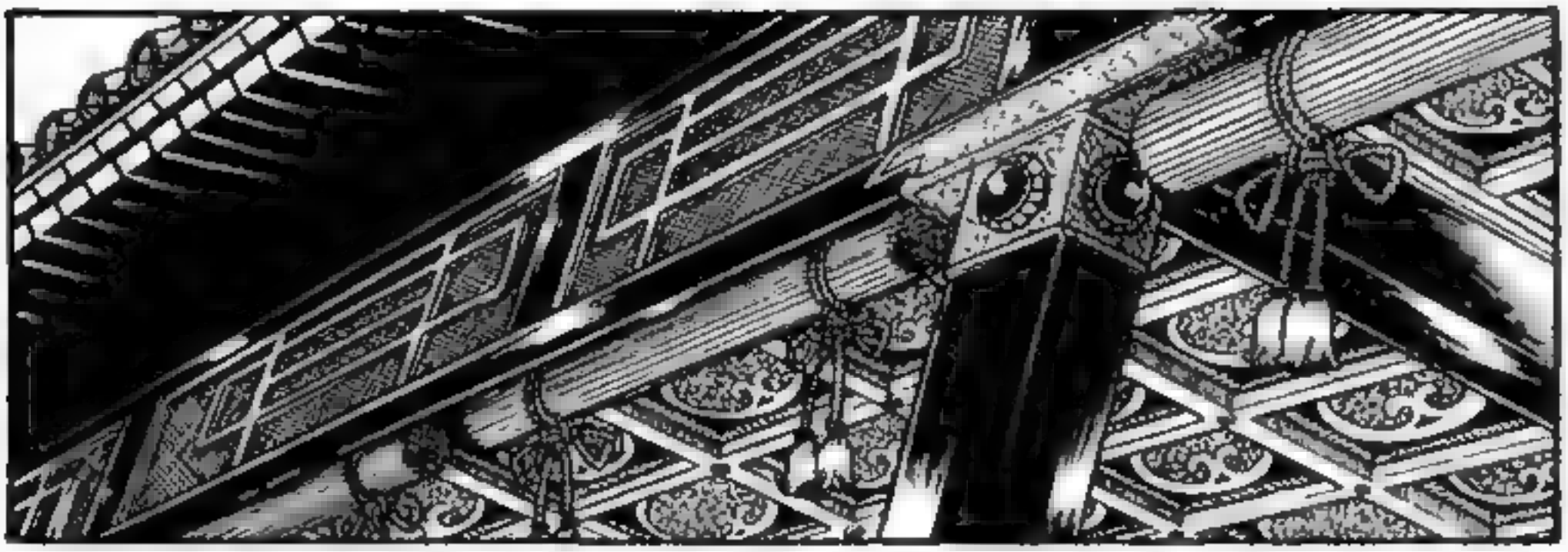
LU BU HAS BETRAYED EVEN HIS FOSTER-FATHERS BEFORE, YOUR HIGHNESS.

BUT HE IS STILL A MAN I WISH TO ALLY WITH.

TRUE... YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN LU BU MIGHT END UP BETRAYING YOU...

YES, GOOD IDEA...

THEN WHAT IF YOUR HIGHNESS ASKS FOR HIM TO SEND HIS DAUGHTER IN ADVANCE?



HOW HAS YUAN SHU REPLIED BACK, MY LORD?

HE SAID HE'LL THINK ABOUT THE MARRIAGE PROPOSAL SO HE WANTS ME TO SEND MY DAUGHTER IN ADVANCE FOR THE TIME BEING.

YES, I KNOW...

W-WHY THAT'S BASICALLY TAKING HER HOSTAGE!

WHAT WILL SIR DO THEN...?

I CANNOT JUST SEND MY BELOVED DAUGHTER AWAY AS A HOSTAGE SO FAR AWAY.

I HAVE MY PRIDE AS A MAN. I SHALL NOT ACCEPT YOUR HUMILIATING CONDITIONS.

TRYING TO EXPLOIT ME, YUAN SHU...?

WE SHALL CONCENTRATE ON BRINGING DOWN LIU BEI FIRST. CAO CAO WILL COME SECOND.

WE NOW HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DEAL WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION ALONE.

XUCHANG

IT SEEMS THAT LU BU HAS FOUND OUT ABOUT OUR PLOT TO ELIMINATE HIM.

WHAT IS IT, MY LORD?

IT SEEMS THAT HE HAS ALREADY LED HIS ARMY TO XIAOPEI.

YES, I KNOW...
MY LORD, XIAOPEI DOES NOT HAVE A VERY SIZEABLE ARMY. IT CANNOT HOLD OUT AGAINST LU BU'S GREATER FORCES FOR LONG.

IT'S JUST THAT I FEEL UNEASY LEAVING THE CAPITAL...

SINCE I HAVE ALREADY ALLIED MYSELF WITH LIU BEI, IT IS ONLY RIGHT THAT I HELP HIM OUT.

TRUE, YOU DO HAVE A POINT.

REST ASSURED, MY LORD, XUCHANG SHALL NOT BE ATTACKED FOR YUAN SHAO IS BUSY DEALING WITH GONGSUN ZAN, WHILE LIU BIAO AND ZHANG XIU ARE STILL RECOVERING THEIR LOSSES.

XIAHOU DUN!

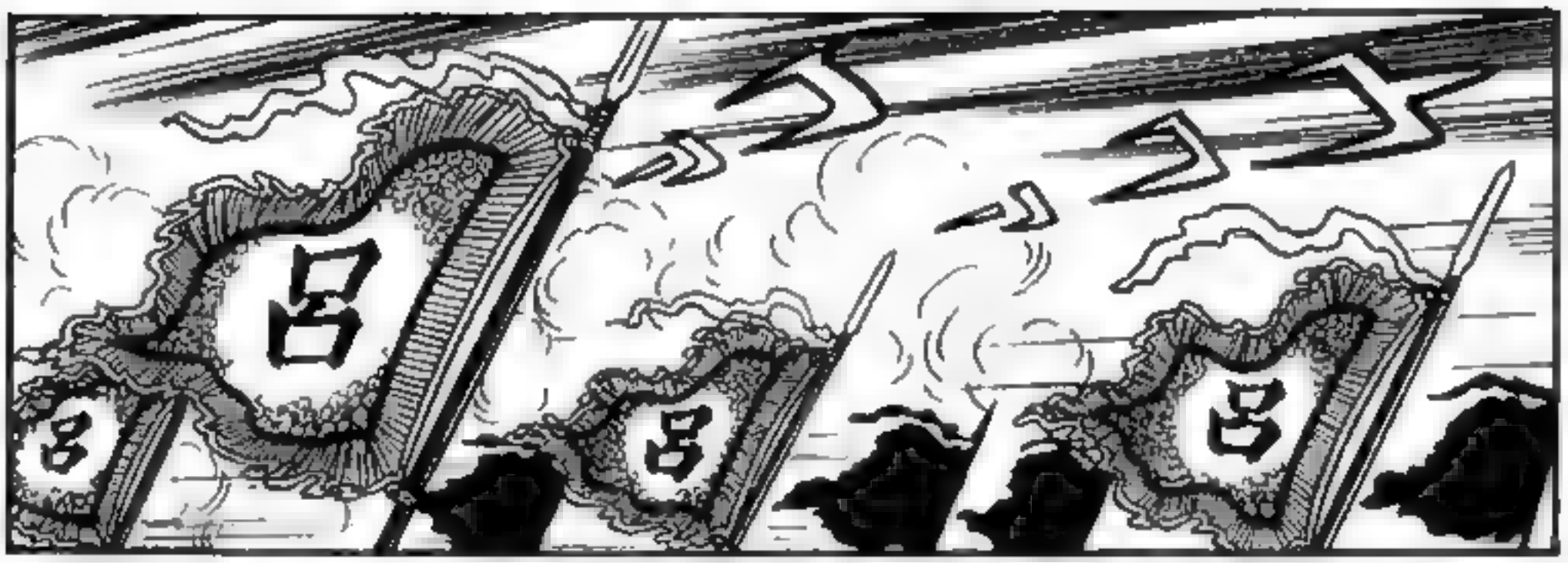
ALRIGHT THEN, I SHALL SEND REINFORCE-MENTS AT ONCE.

I WANT YOU TO LEAD AN ARMY OF 50,000 AND HEAD TO XUZHOU.

YES?

UNDERSTOOD, MY LORD. I SHALL GO FORTH TO XUZHOU AT THE GREATEST SPEED.

XUANDE'S ARMY IS SMALL SO YOU MUST HURRY.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HMPH! HOW HAVE WE STILL NOT CAPTURED THIS PUNY CASTLE YET!?

DO NOT FALTER! KEEP CHARGING!

OR ARE YOU TOO MUCH OF A COWARD FOR THAT!?

LIU BEI! COME OUT AND FIGHT WITH ME!

COME ON OUT, YOU COWARD!

OUR ARMY WILL BE DESTROYED IF WE OPEN THE GATES EVEN FOR JUST A SECOND.

MY LORD MUST NOT FALL FOR LU BU'S INSULTS TO LURE SIR OUT.

XUANDE! AND YOU STILL CALL YOURSELF A MAN!?

WHAT!?
SIR! CAO CAO'S ARMY HAS BEEN SIGHTED AT THE BORDERS!

ROUGHLY 50,000 SIR.
HOW MANY DO THEY NUMBER?

HIS ARMY HAS ARRIVED ALREADY...!?

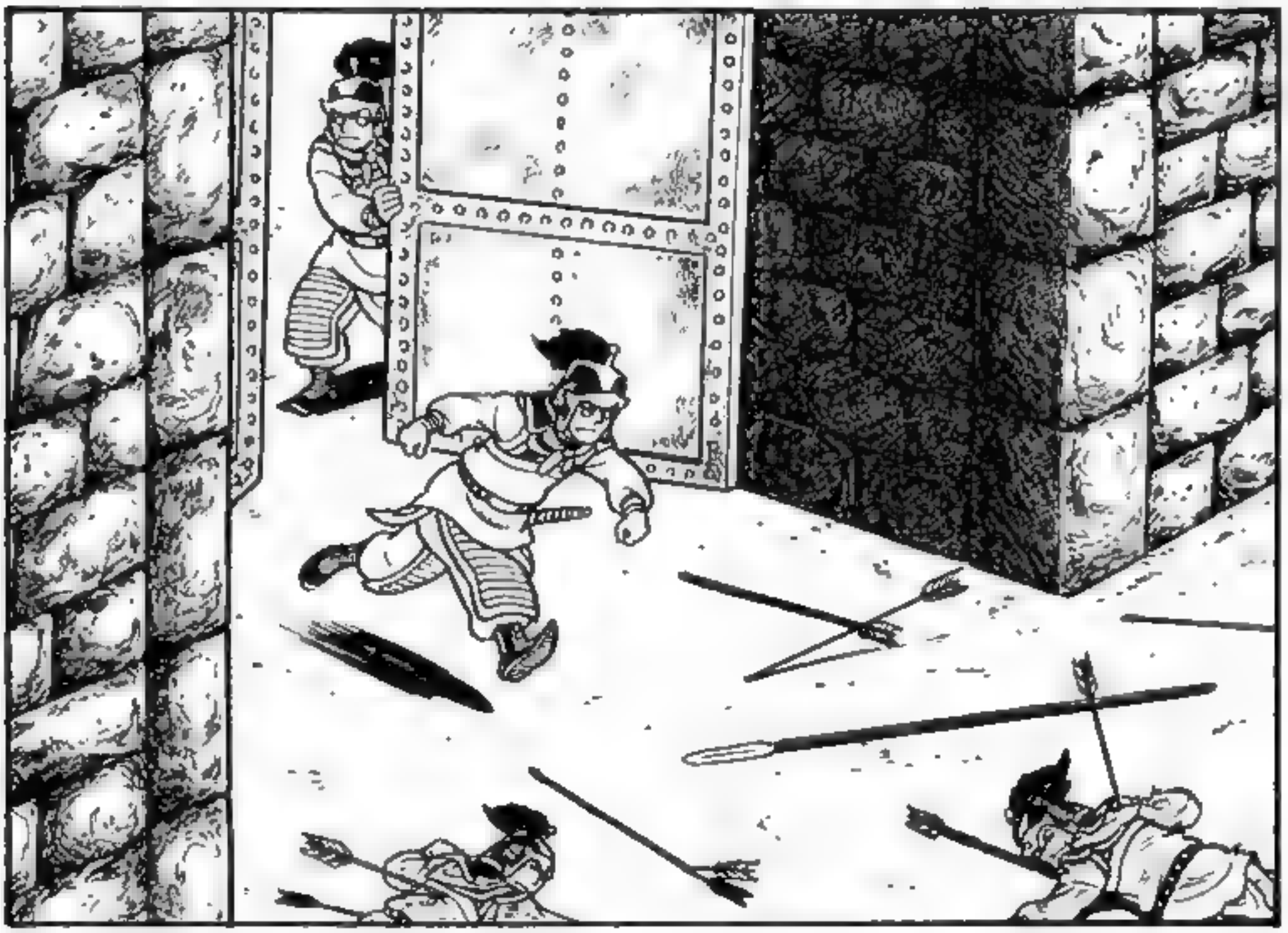
ALRIGHT, WE SHALL DEAL WITH CAO CAO'S ARMY FOR NOW! WE CAN COME BACK TO CAPTURE THIS PUNY CASTLE ANY TIME!

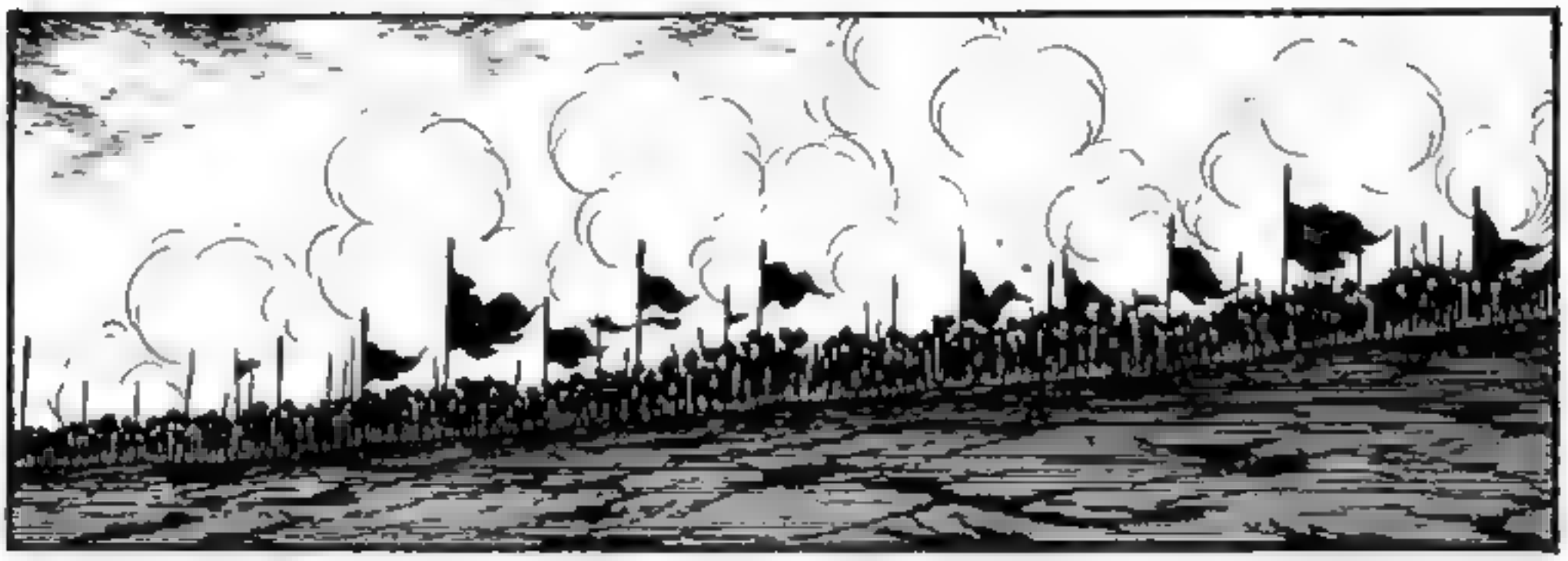
IF IT'S 50,000, THEN THAT MUST ONLY BE HIS FIRST DIVISION THAT HE SENT IN ADVANCE.

HMM?

YES, SIR.
I WANT A SCOUT TO GO AND SEE WHAT'S GOING ON.

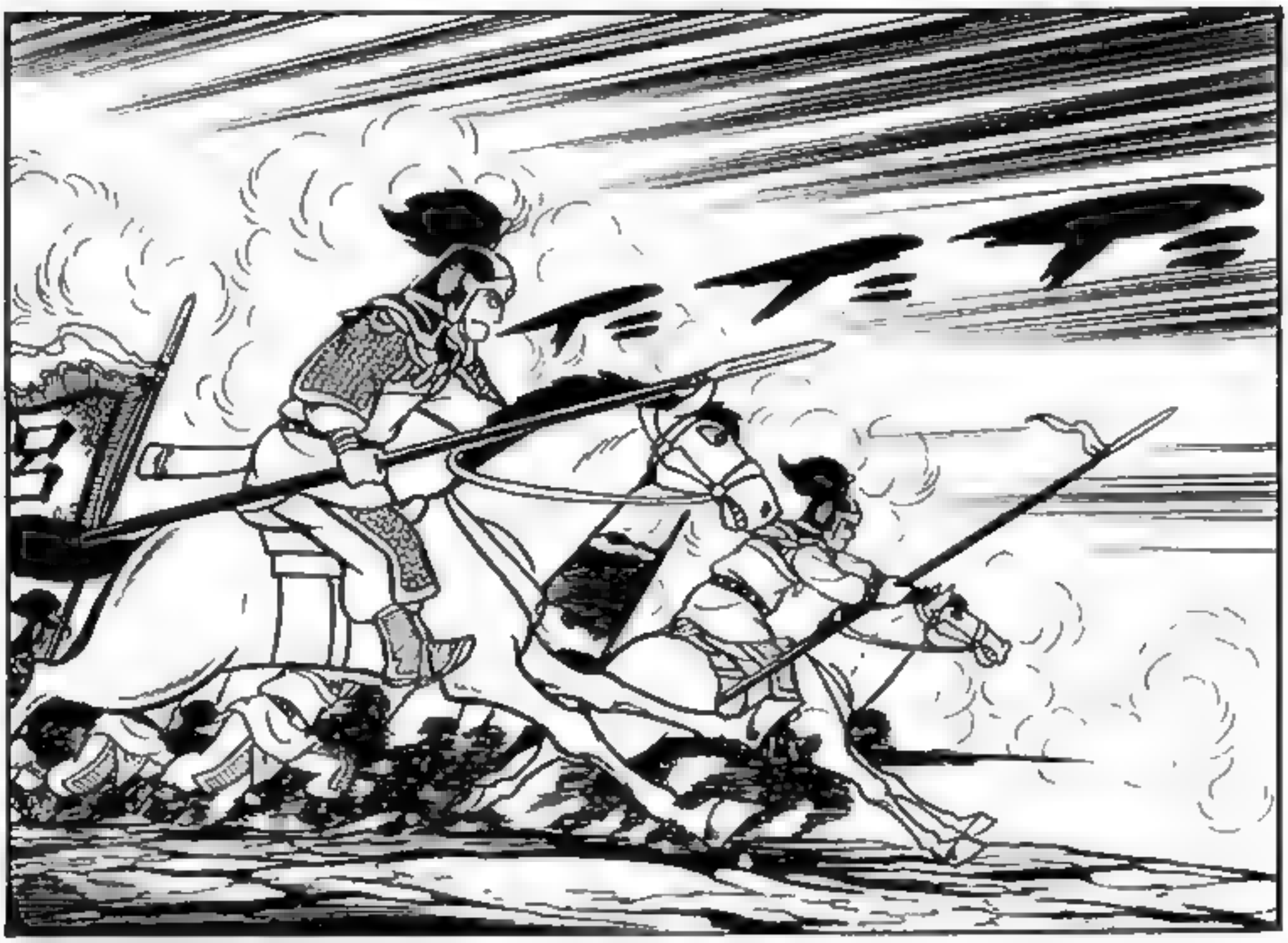
YES...
BROTHER, THE ENEMIES SEEM TO HAVE SUDDENLY RETREATED!



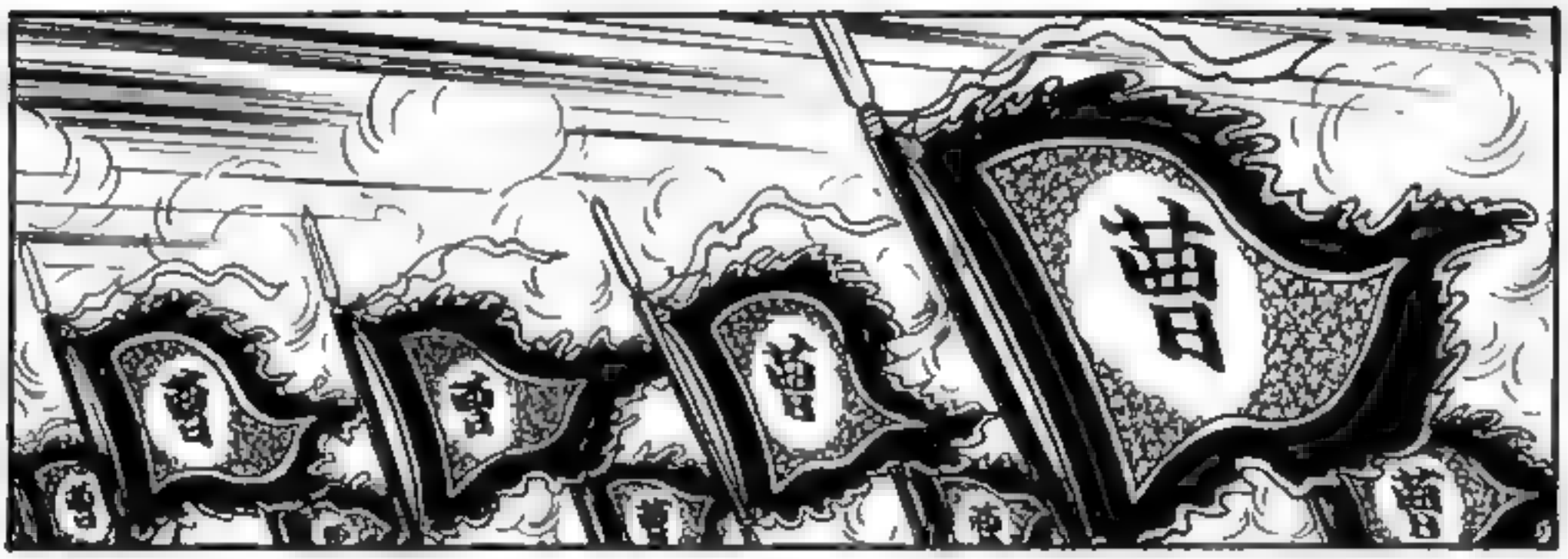


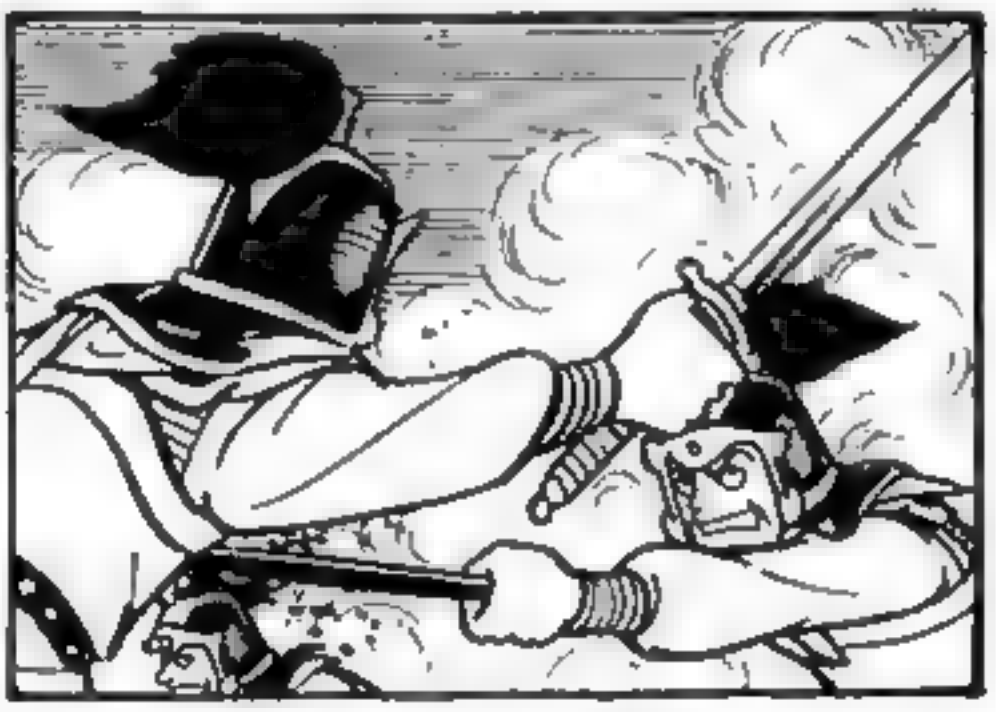
HMM, SO THAT'S THEM...

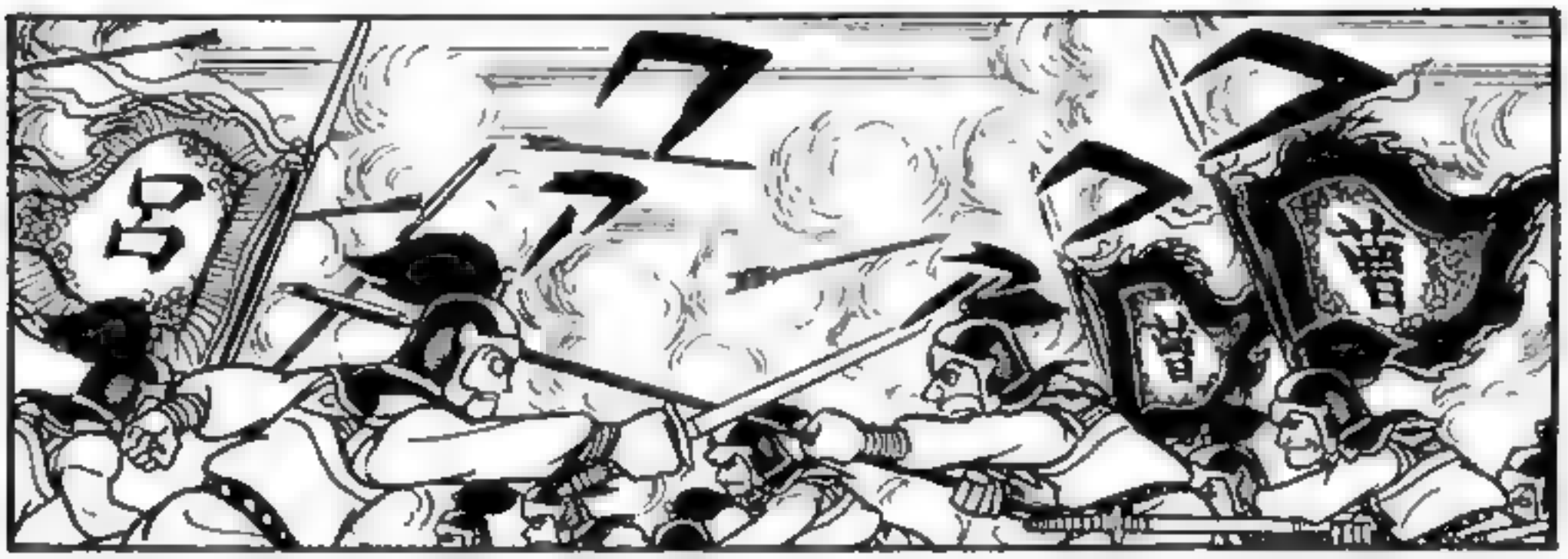
ALRIGHT, MEN! WE MUST DEFEAT THEM BEFORE THEIR 2ND AND 3RD DIVISIONS ARRIVE!



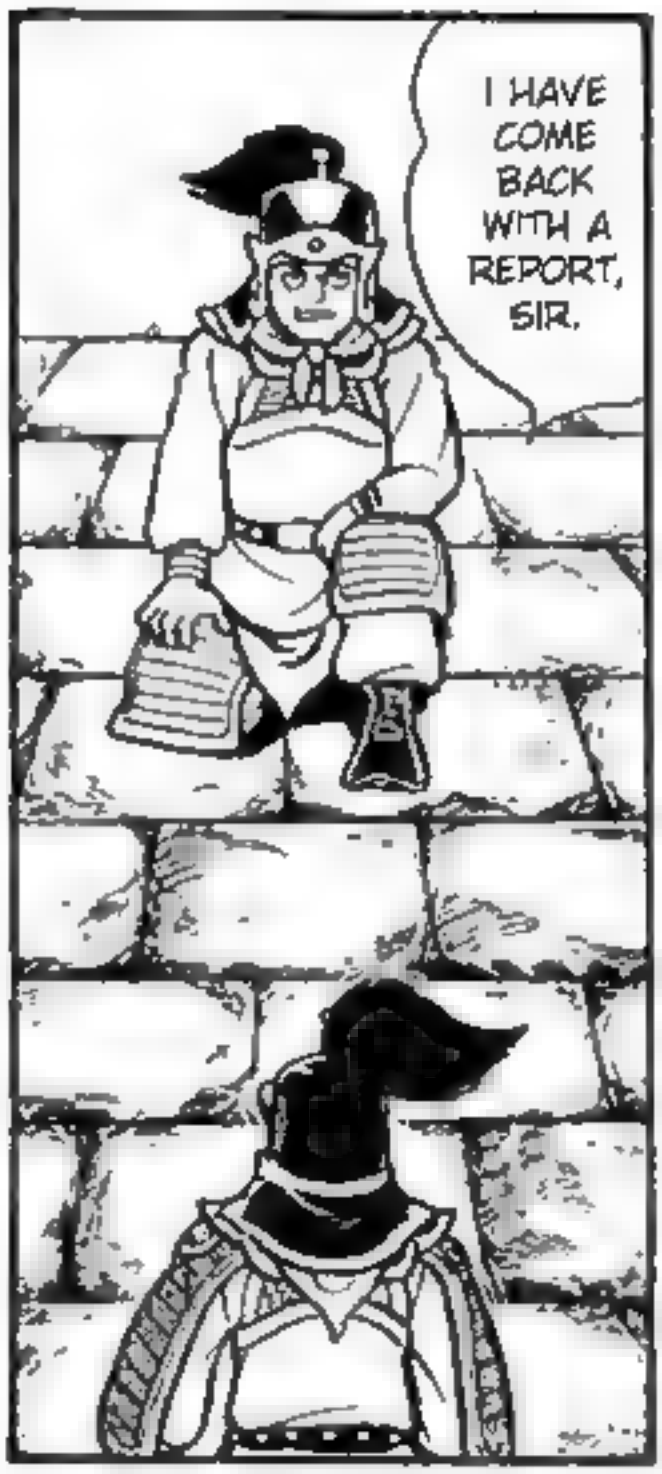
THE ENEMIES ARE COMING! PREPARE TO ENGAGE BATTLE!

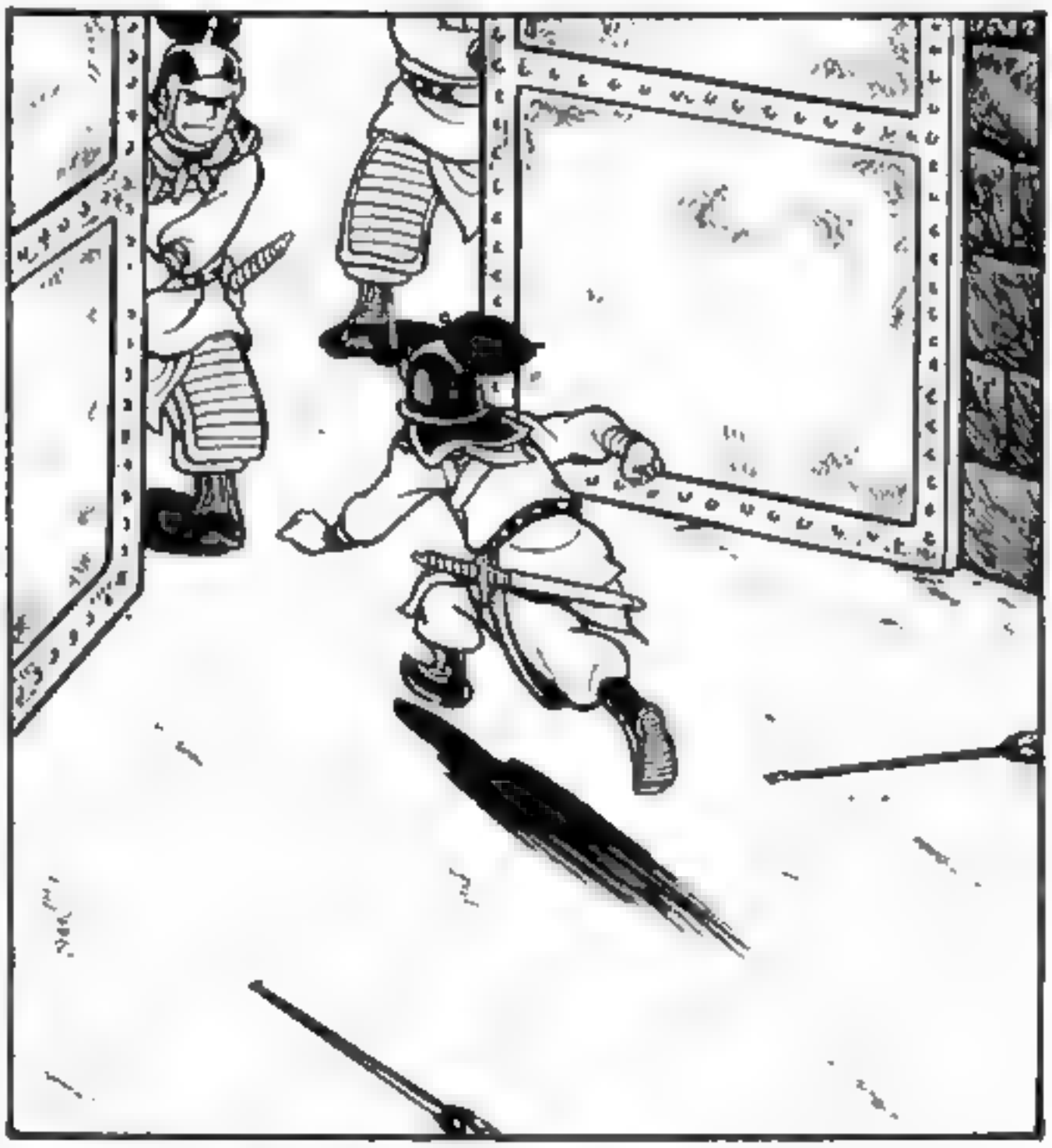






*LU BU (呂), CAO CAO (曹)


I HAVE COME BACK WITH A REPORT, SIR.

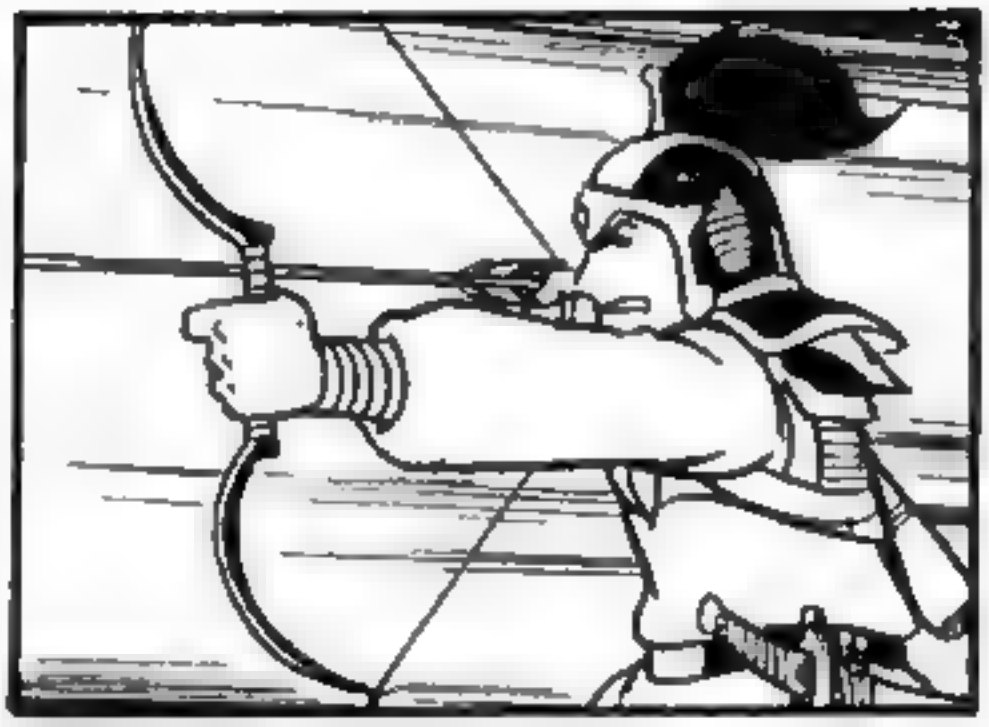


IT SEEMS THAT LU BU HAS GONE OUT TO FIGHT WITH CAO CAO'S FORCES.

NOW IS OUR CHANCE! WE SHALL COME OUT AS WELL TO HELP OUR ALLIES!

SO THE REIN-FORCEMENTS HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED!?

STOP RIGHT THERE! YOU MUST BE THE ENEMY GENERAL!



AGHH!!!

SIR!

THAT BASTARD ...!

UNFOR-
GIVABLE!

WE MUST TEND TO SIR'S WOUNDS IMMEDIATELY!

GENERAL, YOU CANNOT FIGHT AS YOU ARE RIGHT NOW!

NGHHH, FINE. RETREAT!

RETREAT! RETREAT! RETREAT!

NO, WAIT.

SHALL WE GIVE CHASE, SIR!?

YES...

SIR, CAO CAO'S FORCES ARE RETREATING!

YES, SIR. THEY HAVE ALREADY ENGAGED IN BATTLE WITH OUR SOLDIERS AT THE REAR.

DID YOU SAY THAT LIU BEI HAS COME OUT OF HIS CASTLE?

ALL UNITS TURN BACK TO FIGHT WITH LIU BEI'S FORCES!

THEN NOW IS OUR BEST CHANCE TO DEFEAT HIM AND CAPTURE XIAOPEI!

VICTORY IS WITHIN MY GRASP...!

AH!

CURSES...! WE CANNOT HOPE TO FIGHT THEM HEAD ON ALL ALONE!

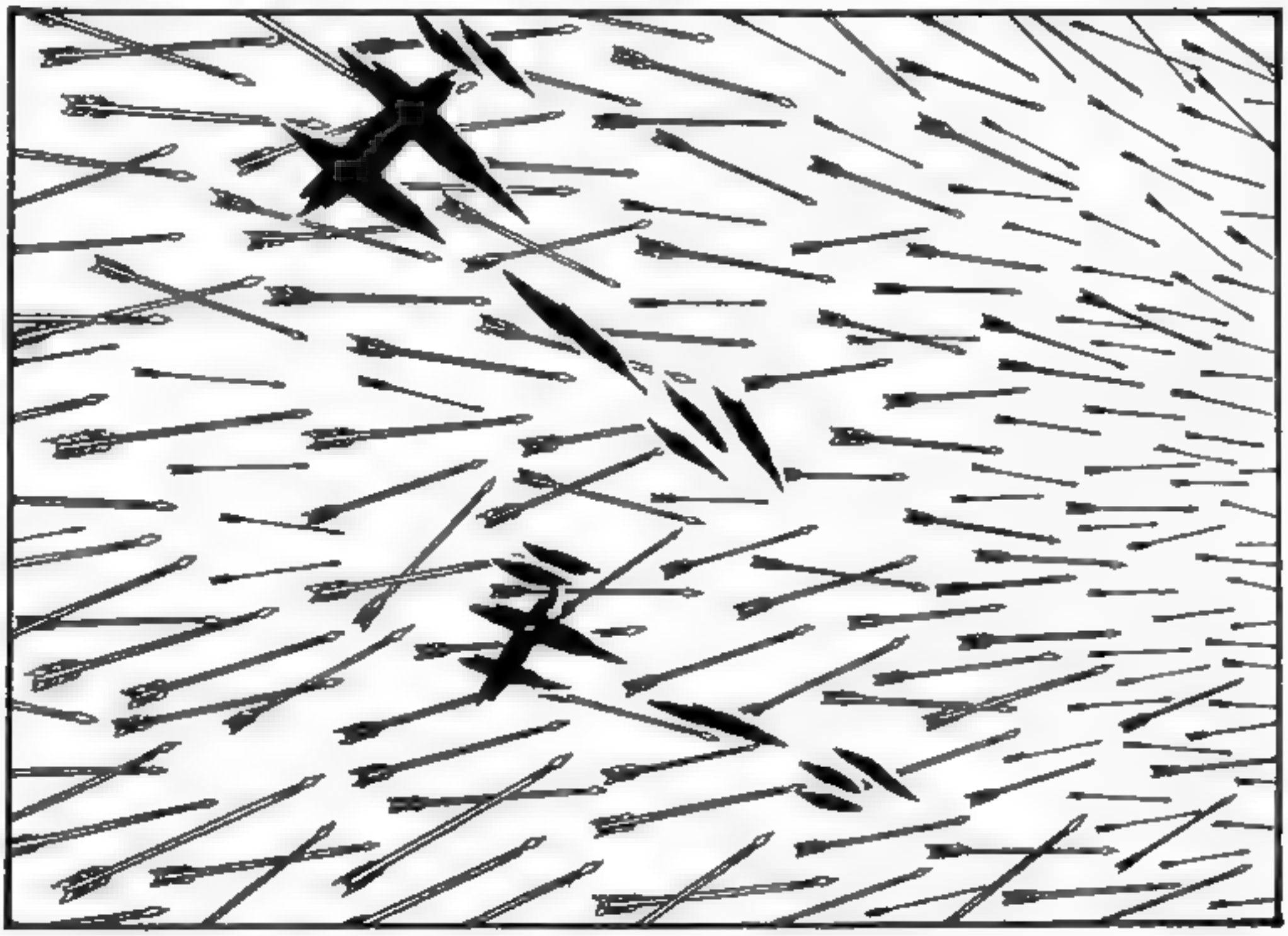
SIR! LU BU HAS SUDDENLY TURNED HIS ENTIRE ARMY AROUND AND IS COMING TO FIGHT US HEAD ON!

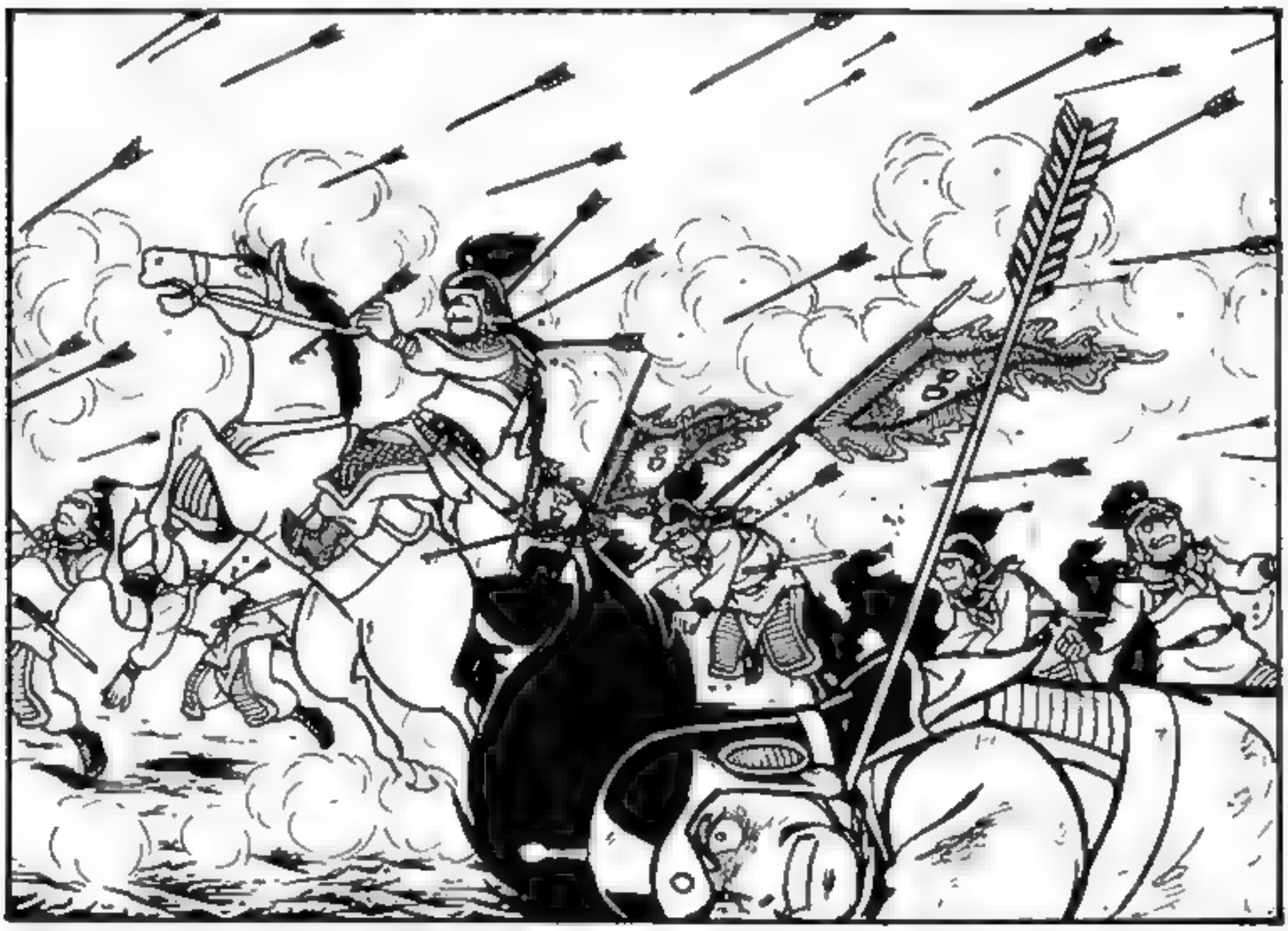
RETREAT! RETREAT RETREAT BACK TO THE CASTLE!

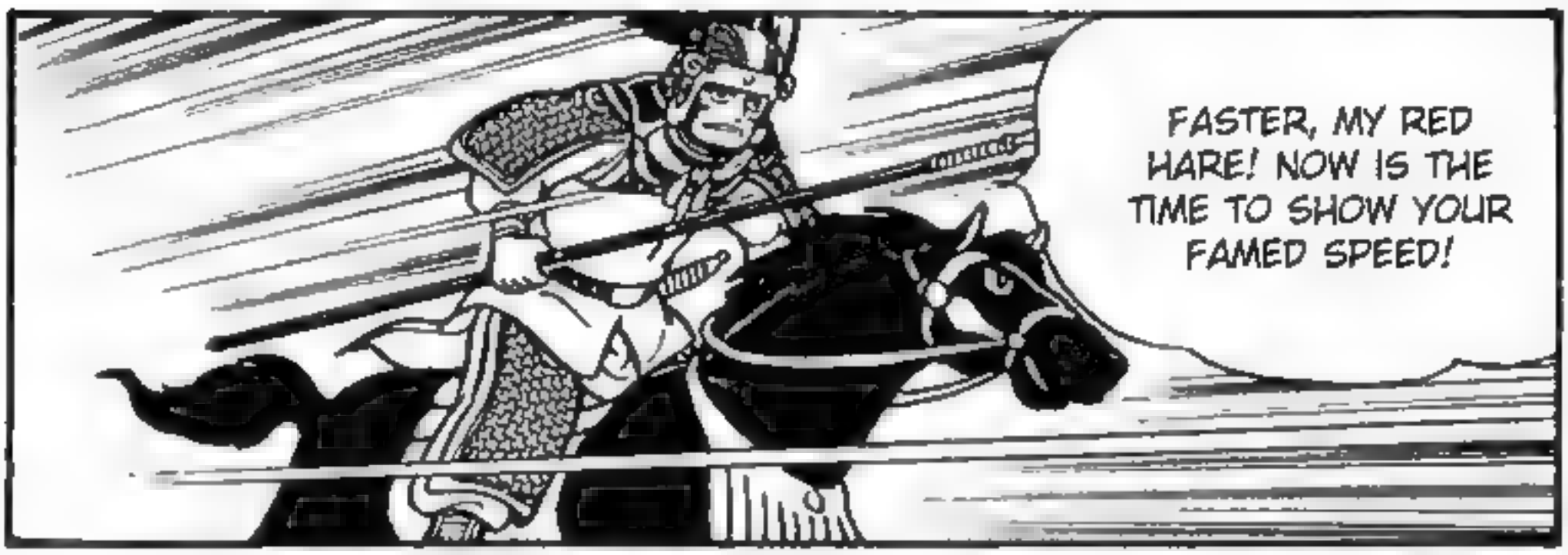
DAMN... THE ENEMIES HAVE ALREADY BEGUN THEIR RETREAT!

COVER THE SKY WITH OUR ARROWS!

FIRE THE ARROWS!






FASTER, MY RED HARE! NOW IS THE TIME TO SHOW YOUR FAMED SPEED!

LET US FOLLOW AFTER OUR LORD!

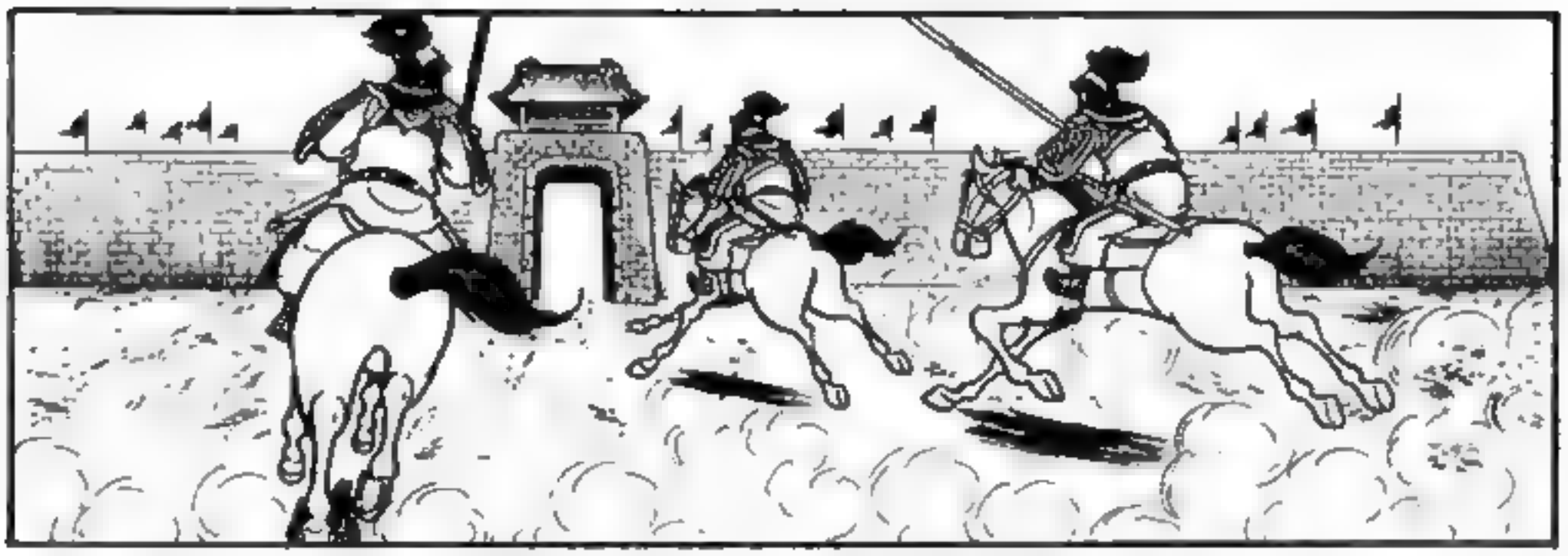
DO NOT FALL BEHIND!

AGHH! IT'S LI BU!

CLEAR THE WAY, YOU LITTLE RUNTS!

AH!

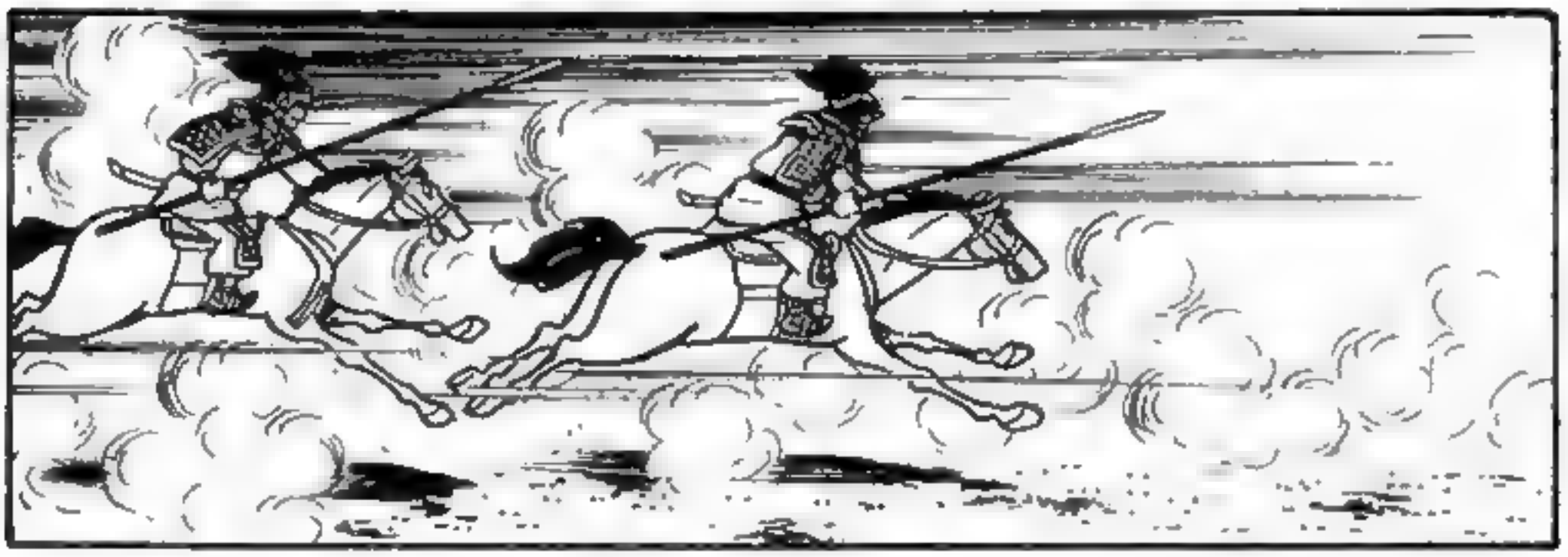
LIU BEI, WHERE ARE YOU!?



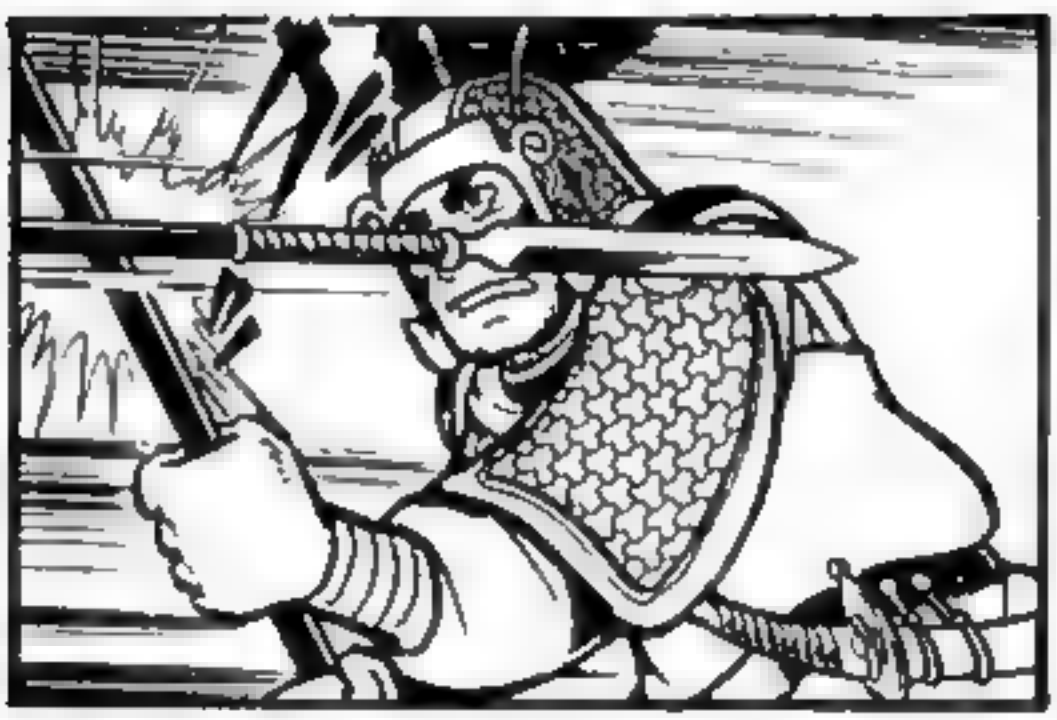
MY LORD, LU BU IS RIGHT BEHIND US!

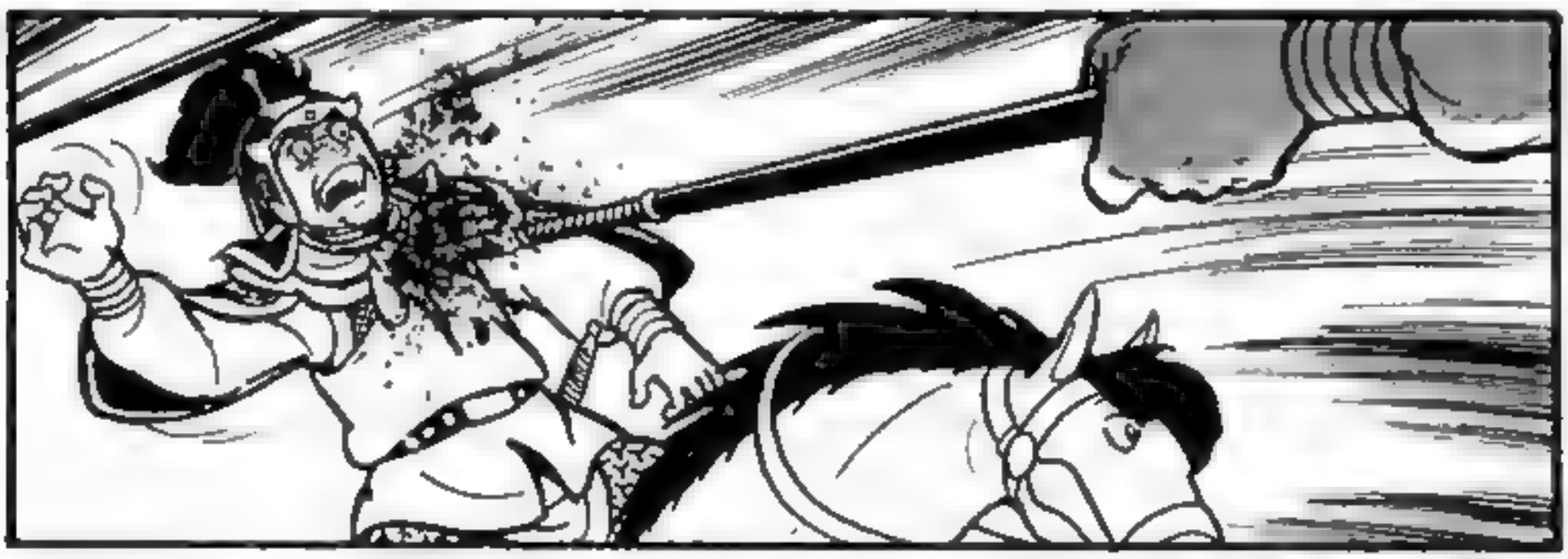
THERE YOU ARE!

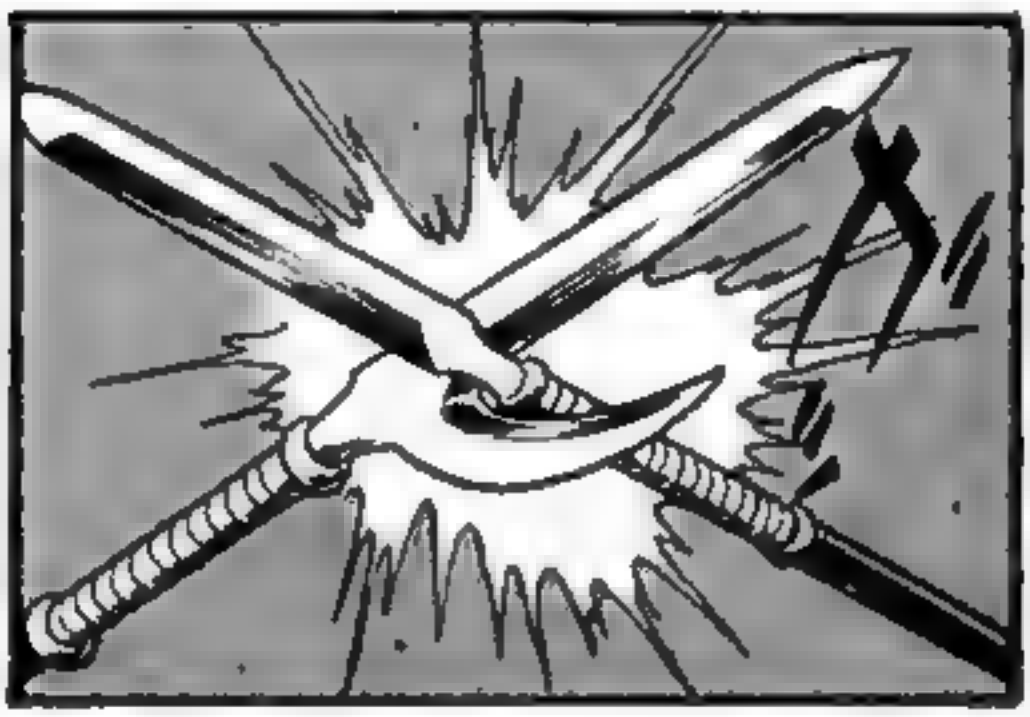
PLEASE CONTINUE ON BACK TO THE CASTLE! WE SHALL DO OUR BEST TO HOLD HIM EVEN FOR JUST A LITTLE WHILE.



MOVE OUT OF THE WAY! YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR ME!







HAHH!

FOOLS!

LIU BEI! LET US SETTLE OUR DIFFERENCES ONCE AND FOR ALL!

ARCHERS! AIM FOR LU BU!

OUR LORD IS IN TROUBLE!

THOSE TWO ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT CAN FIGHT WITH LU BU EVENLY!

WHERE ARE GENERALS GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI!?

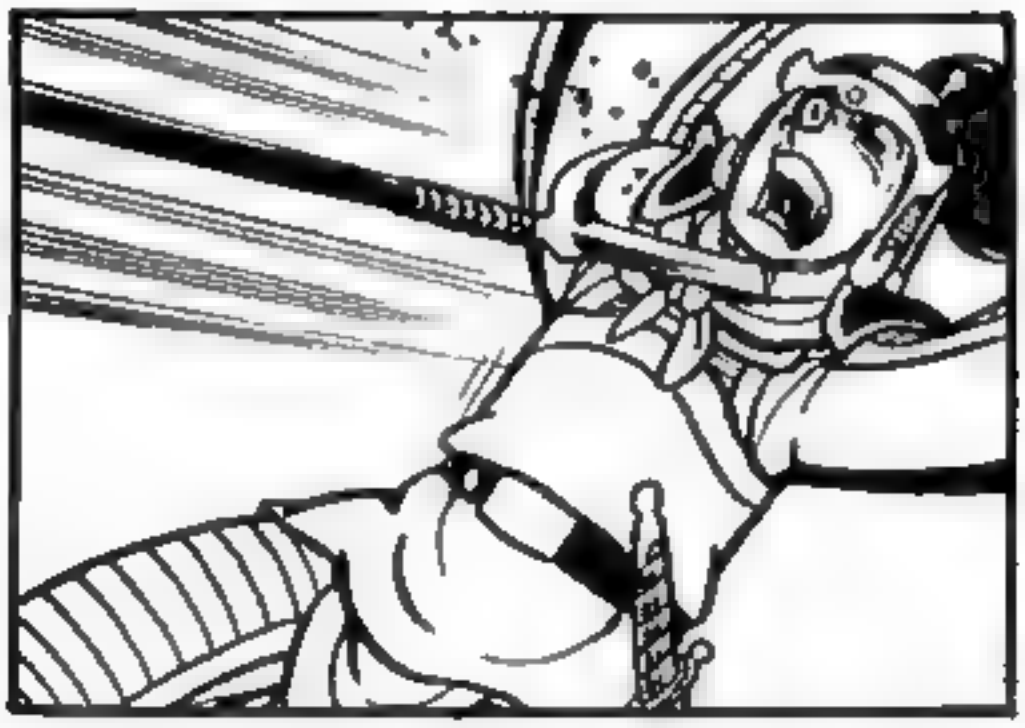
HE'S MUCH TOO CLOSE TO OUR LORD! WE MAY END UP SHOOTING OUR LORD INSTEAD!

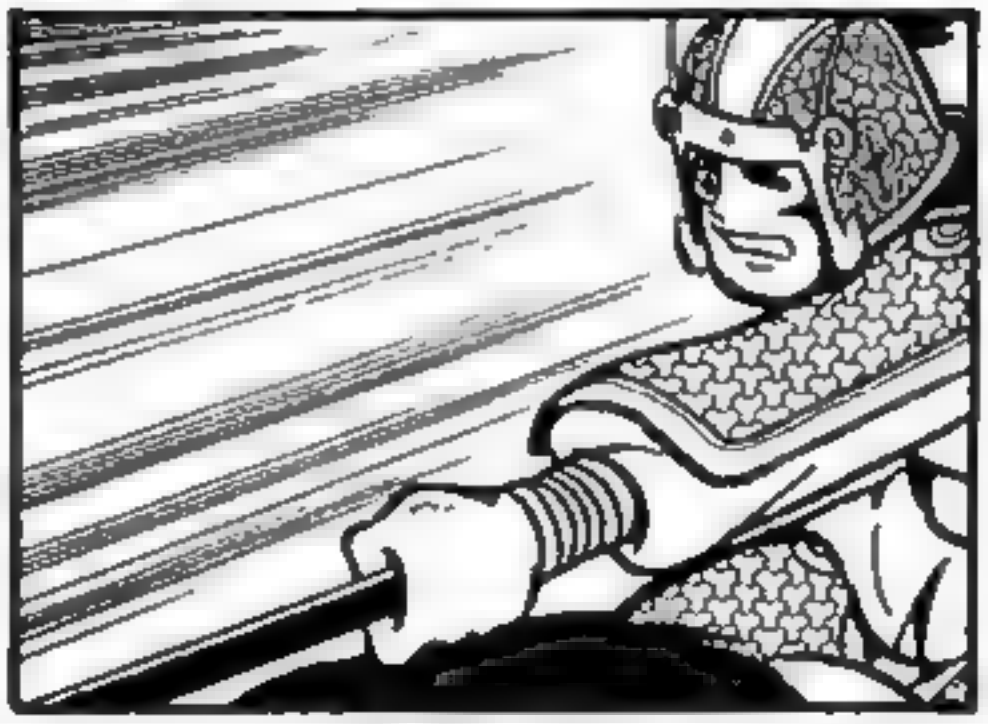
THEY CANNOT MAKE IT BACK HERE IN TIME!

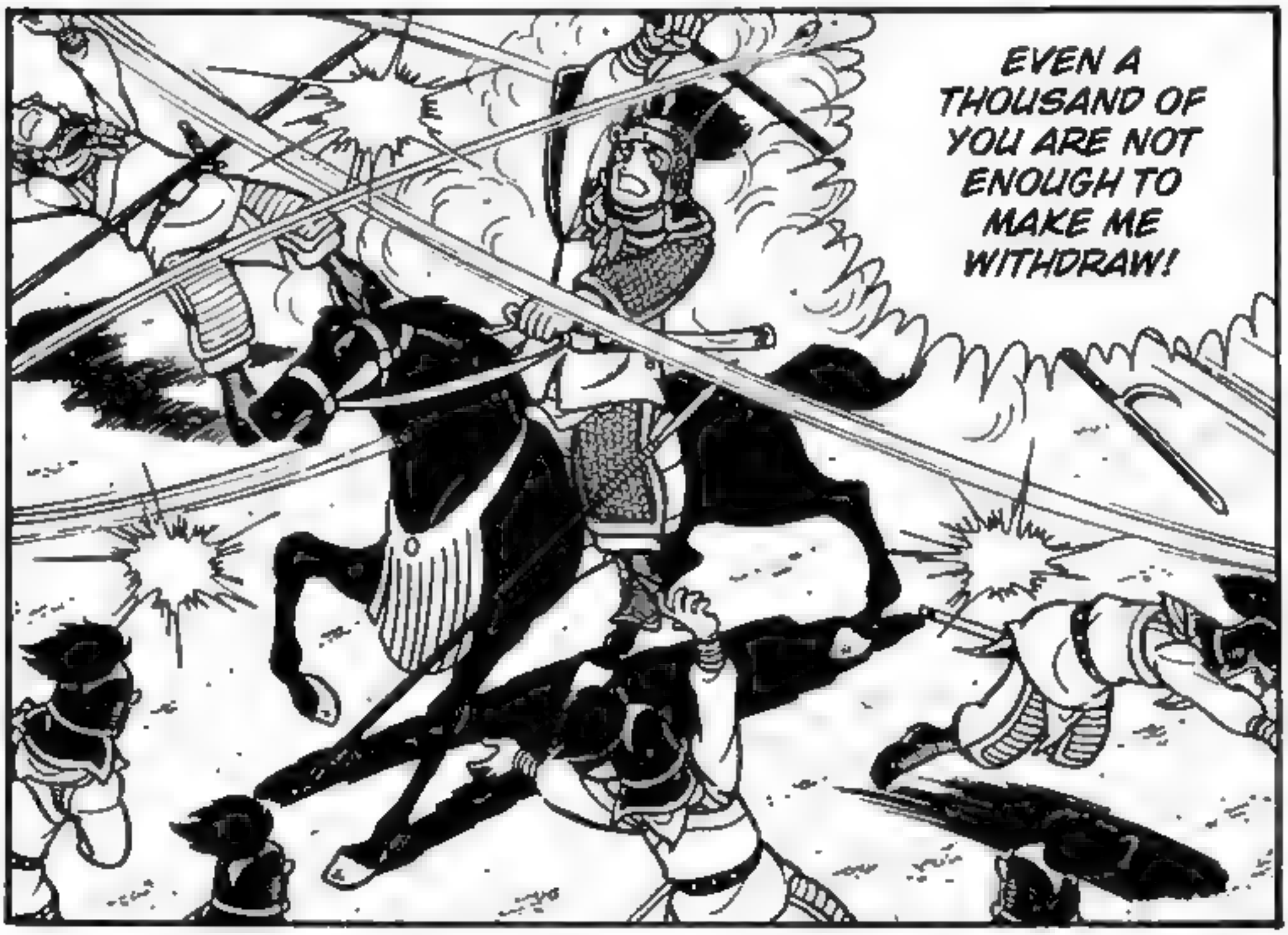
GENERAL GUAN YU IS BUSY FIGHTING THE ENEMIES ON THE RIGHT WING, WHILE GENERAL ZHANG FEI IS BUSY DEALING WITH THE LEFT WING!

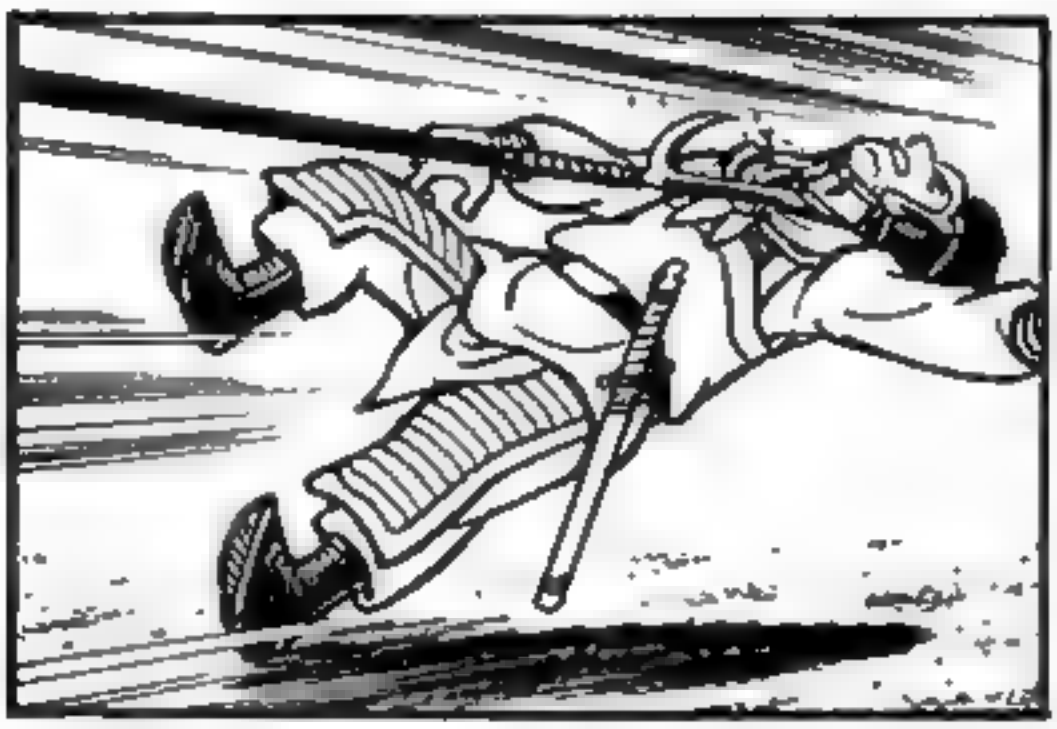
THEN WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO OUR BEST TO FEND OFF LU BU OURSELVES!

ANNOYING
LITTLE
THINGS!



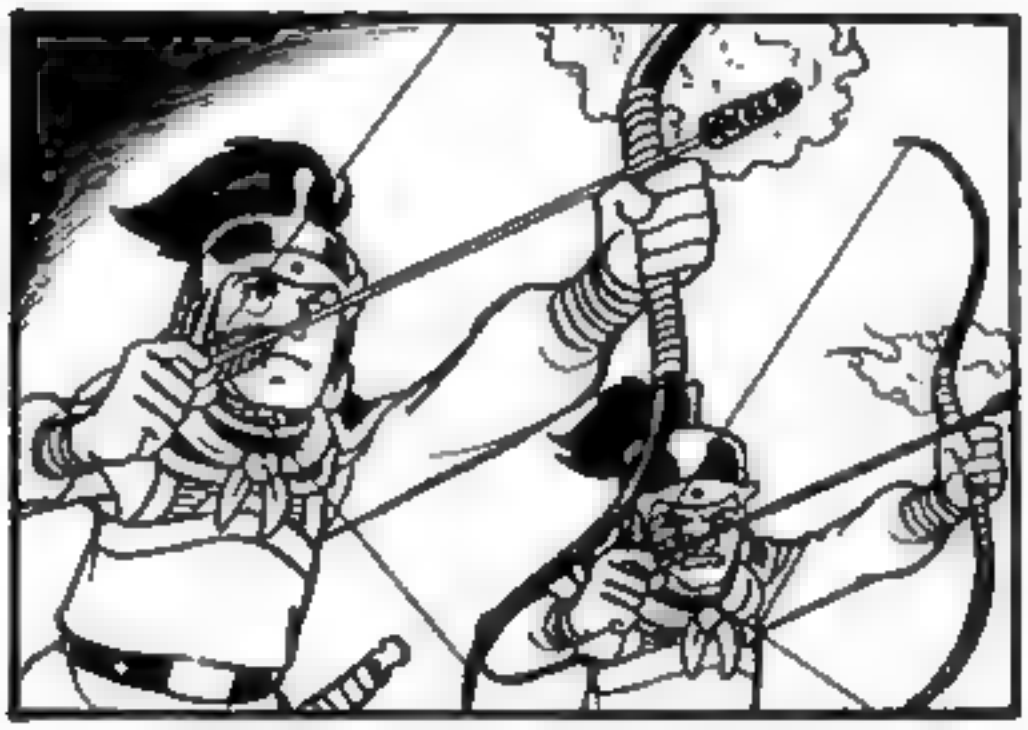


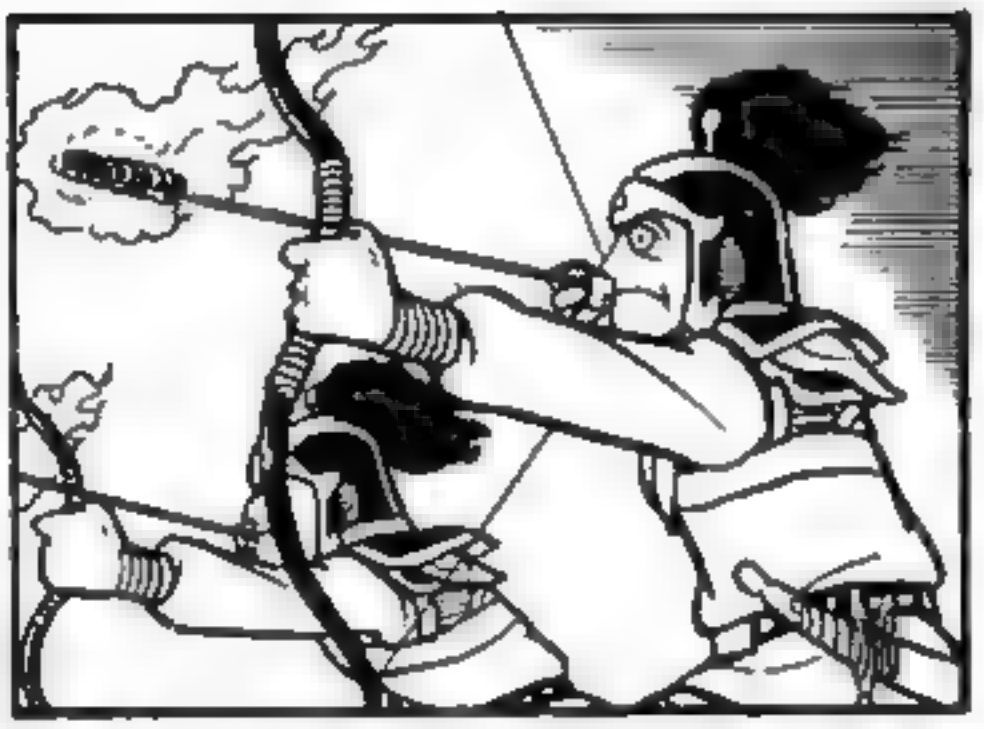

EVEN A
THOUSAND OF
YOU ARE NOT
ENOUGH TO
MAKE ME
WITHDRAW!

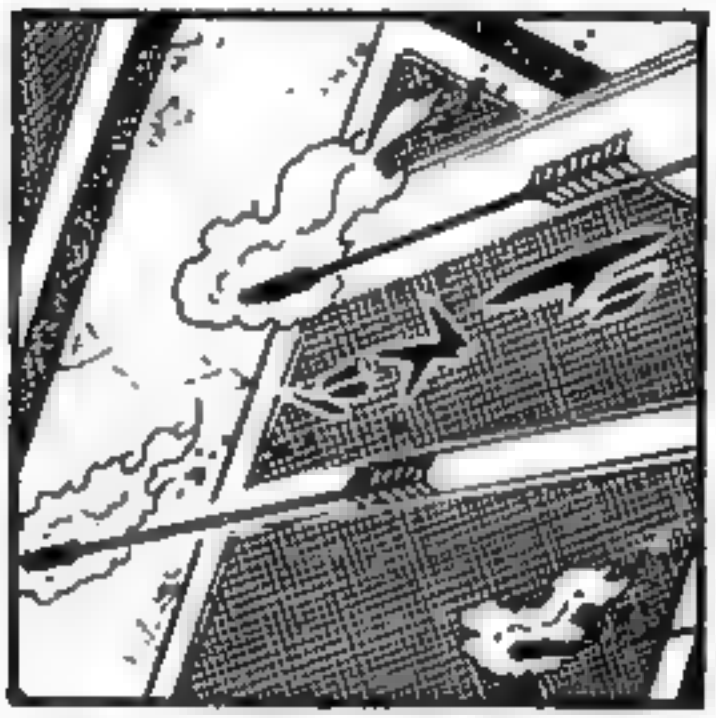


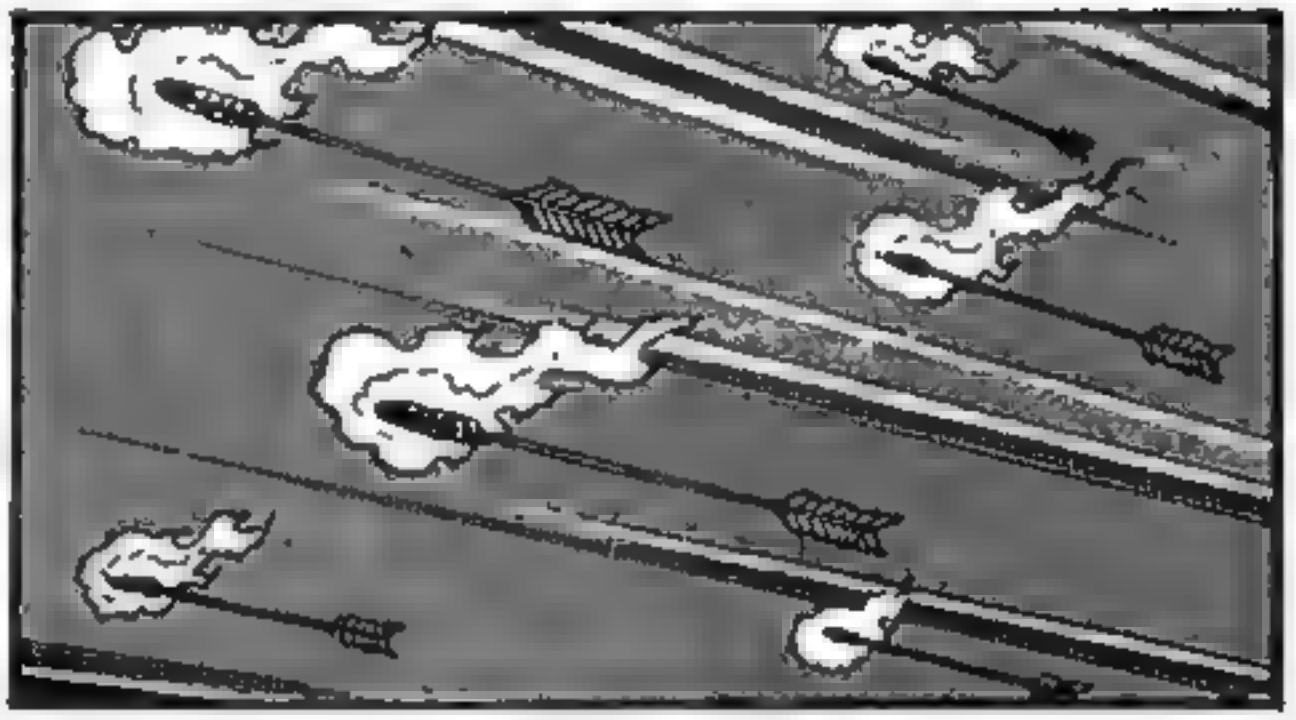
YES, FIND LIU BEI AT ONCE!
NOW THAT WE'VE MADE IT PAST THE GATES, LEAVE THE REST TO US, SIR!

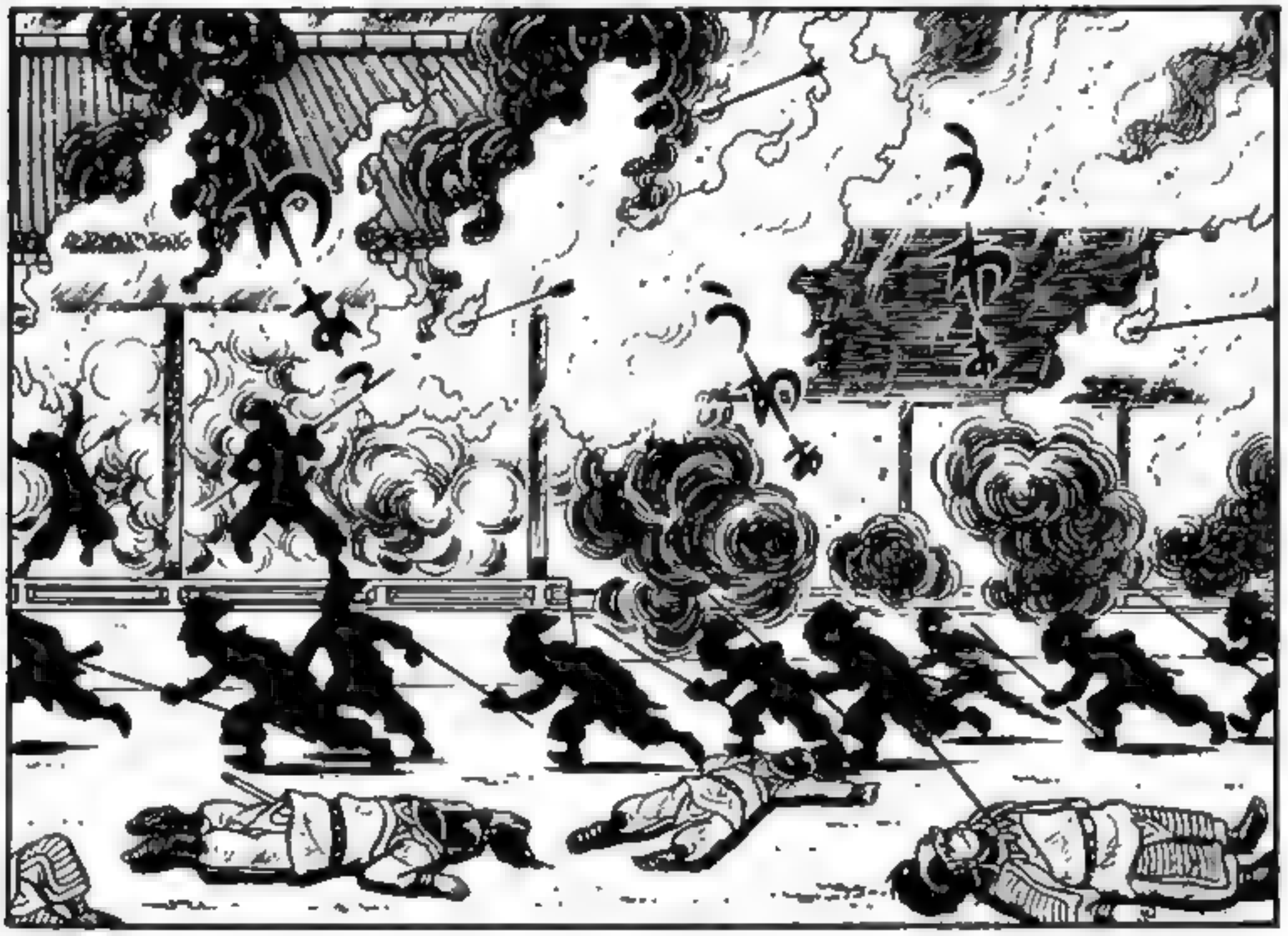
BURN DOWN XIAOPEI AND KILL ALL ITS GARRISON!











YES, GENERAL.

WHAT! XIAOPEI HAS FALLEN TO LU BU'S FORCES!?

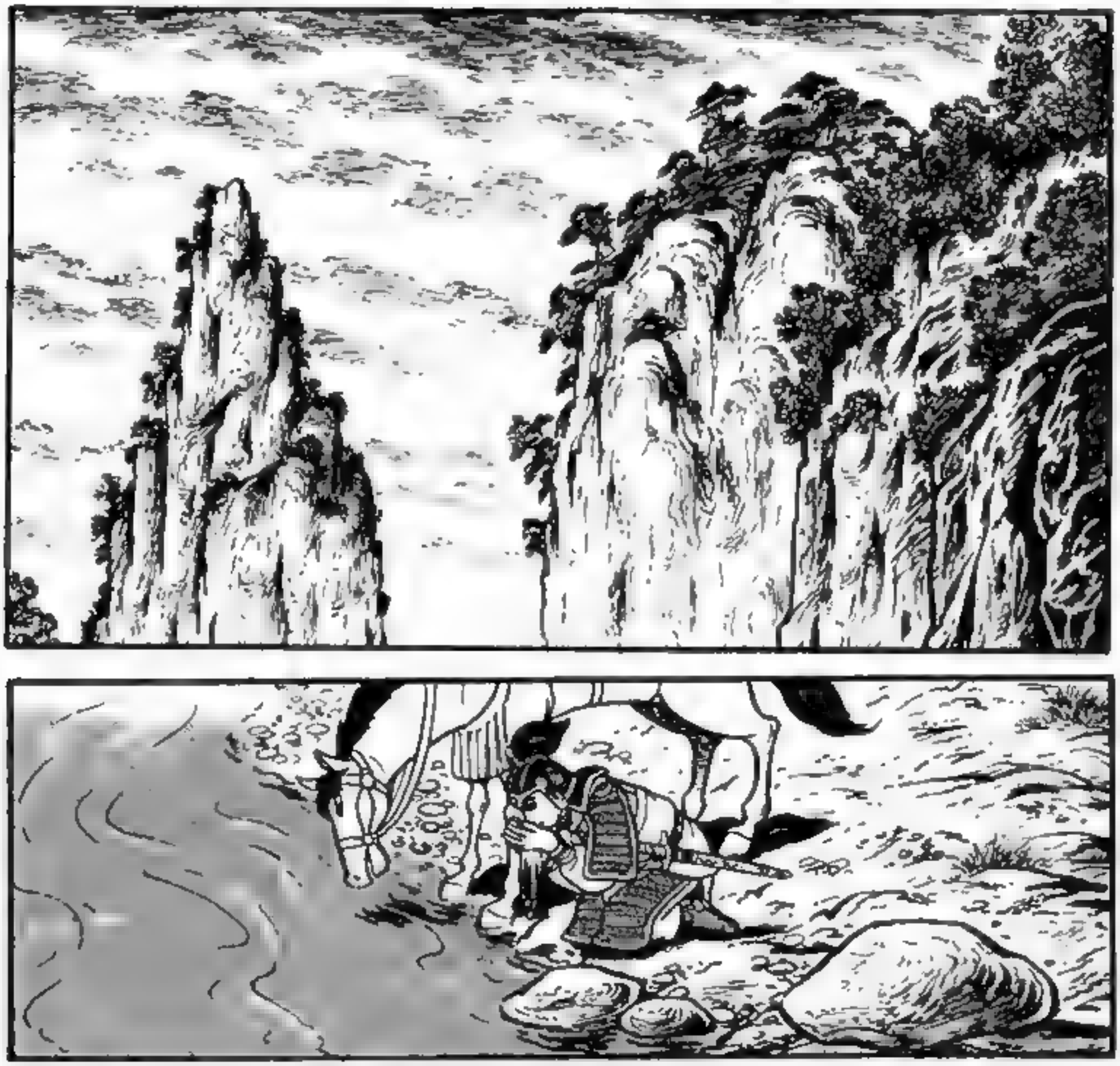
AGHH...

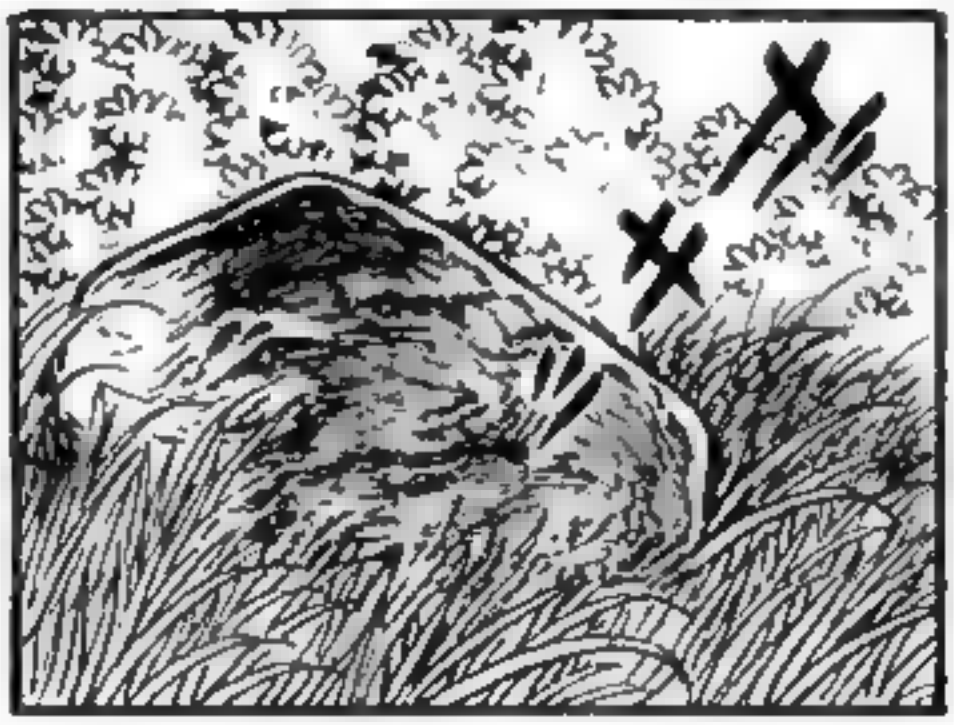
HE IS CURRENTLY MISSING. AS FOR THE REST OF HIS ARMY, THEY HAVE EITHER FLED OR BEEN KILLED.

AND WHAT OF LIU BEI?

DAMN... IF IT WASN'T FOR THIS EYE, THIS WOULD HAVE NEVER HAPPENED...

BATTLE OF MT. TAISHAN





I'M NOT ANYONE SUSPICIOUS, SIR. I'M FROM A VILLAGE NEAR HERE.

WHO'S THERE!?

AND WHY DO YOU ASK THAT?

COULD SIR BE LIU BEI OF XIAOPEI?

BUT I'VE HEARD THAT XIAOPEI HAS NOW FALLEN TO LU BU'S HANDS AND RUMOURS SAY THAT LIU BEI IS NOW FORCED TO WANDER THESE PARTS.

OUR GOVERNOR LIU BEI HAS ALWAYS TREATED THE PEOPLE OF HIS LAND WITH WARMTH AND KINDNESS.

I AM NOT THIS LIU BEI YOU SPEAK OF...

ALL THE VILLAGERS BELIEVE WE MUST DO OUR BEST TO HELP OUT OUR LORD IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES.

HE LOOKS AWFULLY SIMILAR TO WHAT THE PEOPLE SAY... I'M SURE HE'S HIDING HIS IDENTITY TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.

BUT I AM SURE THAT HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HEAR THE PEOPLE THINK SO MUCH OF HIM.

AH, HERE.

THERE ARE NO PLACES THAT SERVE FOOD OF ANY SORT AROUND THESE PARTS. SO PLEASE, TAKE MY MEAL, SIR...

HMM? WHAT IS IT?

I CAN ALWAYS RETURN TO MY VILLAGE AND EAT AT MY HOME. SO PLEASE, I'D BE HONOURED IF YOU WOULD ACCEPT.

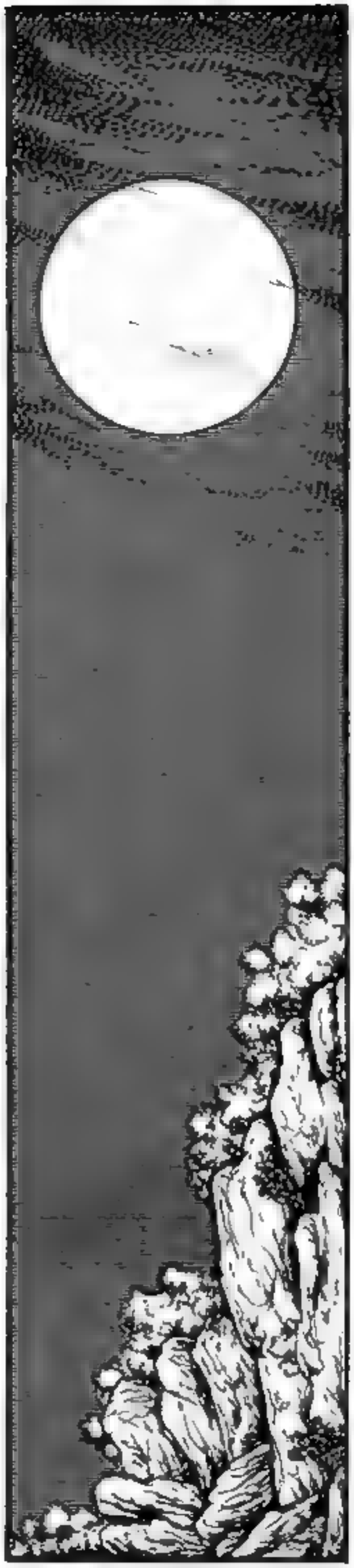
THEN WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR FOOD?

GOOD BYE.

I THANK YOU KINDLY.

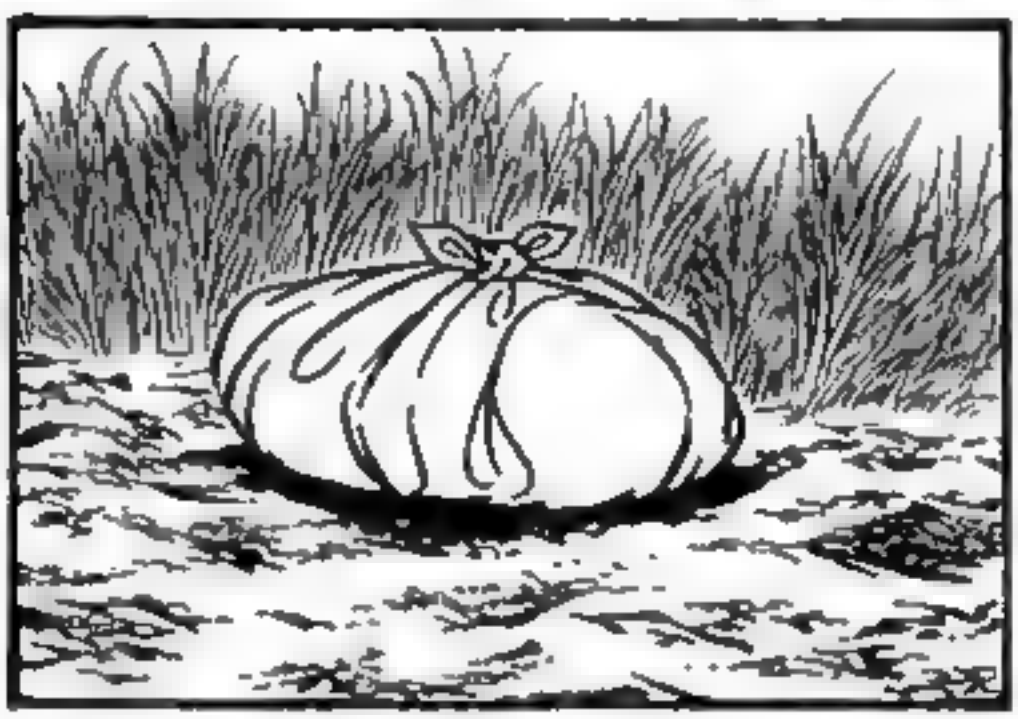
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. THAT MAN WAS OUR LORD, LIU BEI.

AH!



THOSE WERE THE SOUNDS OF FOOT-STEPS...

MAYBE IT WAS JUST AN ANIMAL ...?



AH!

I DO NOT KNOW WHO GAVE ME THIS, BUT I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL.

IT'S FOOD AND WATER!

HMM?

THANK YOU, KIND STRANGERS. YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH THESE GIFTS GIVE ME THE COURAGE TO KEEP ON MOVING.

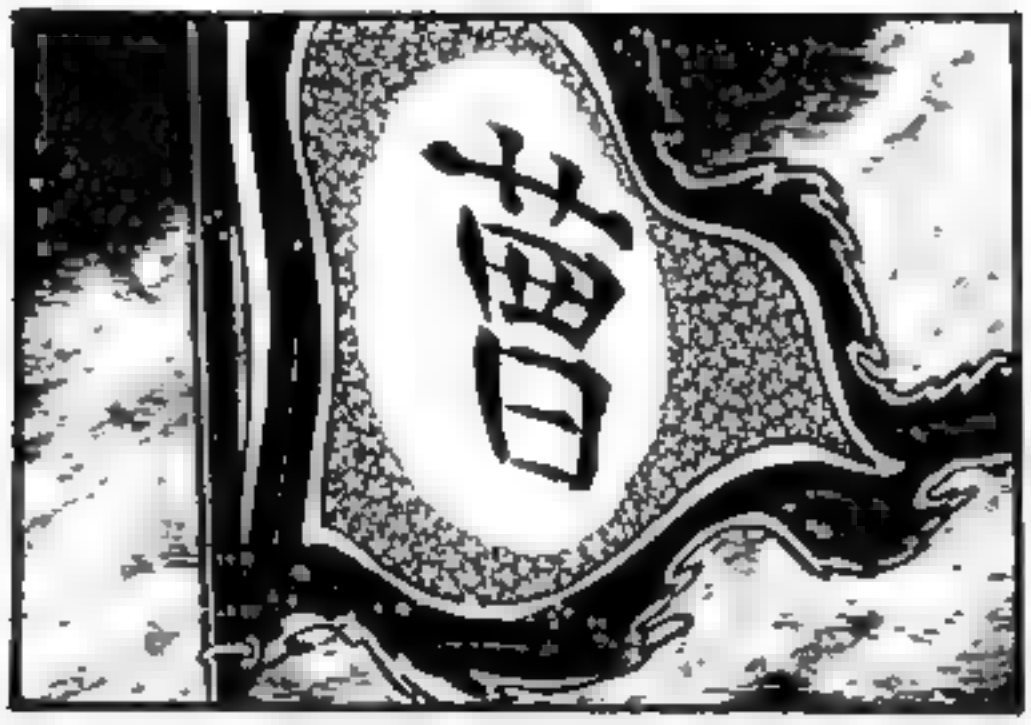
ANOTHER BAG OF FOOD...?

THE VILLAGERS HAD LONG DEEPLY ADMIRED THEIR KIND LORD, AND THUS HAD SECRETLY PLACED FOOD ALONG LIU BEI'S PATH FOR HIM TO FIND.

AH!

SOL-
DIERS!

BUT WHOSE
ARMY DO THEY
BELONG TO...?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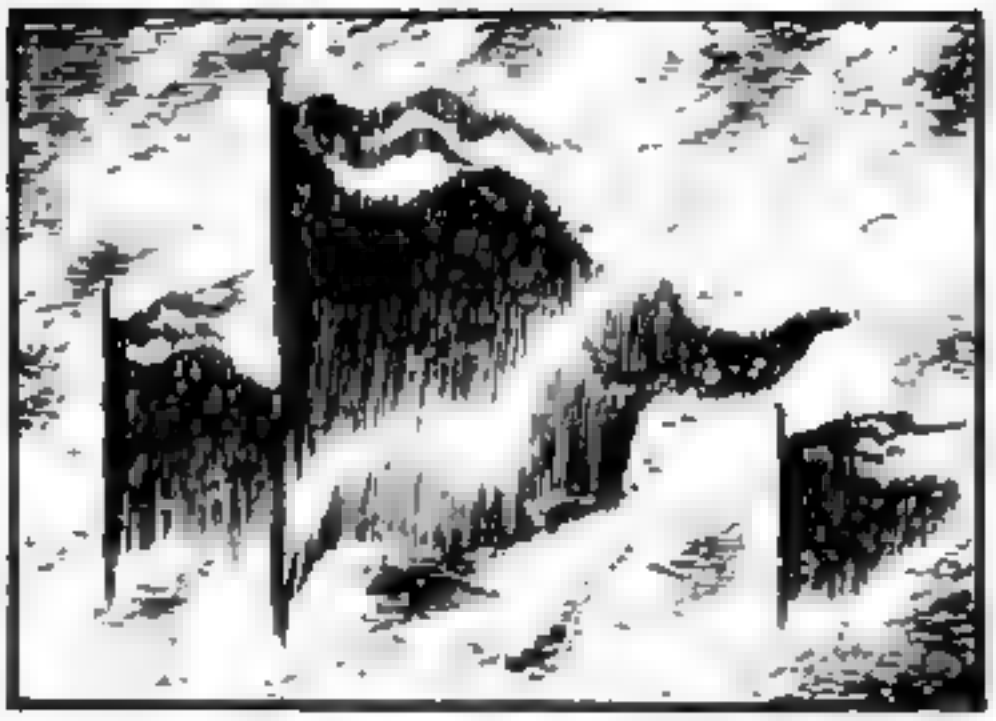
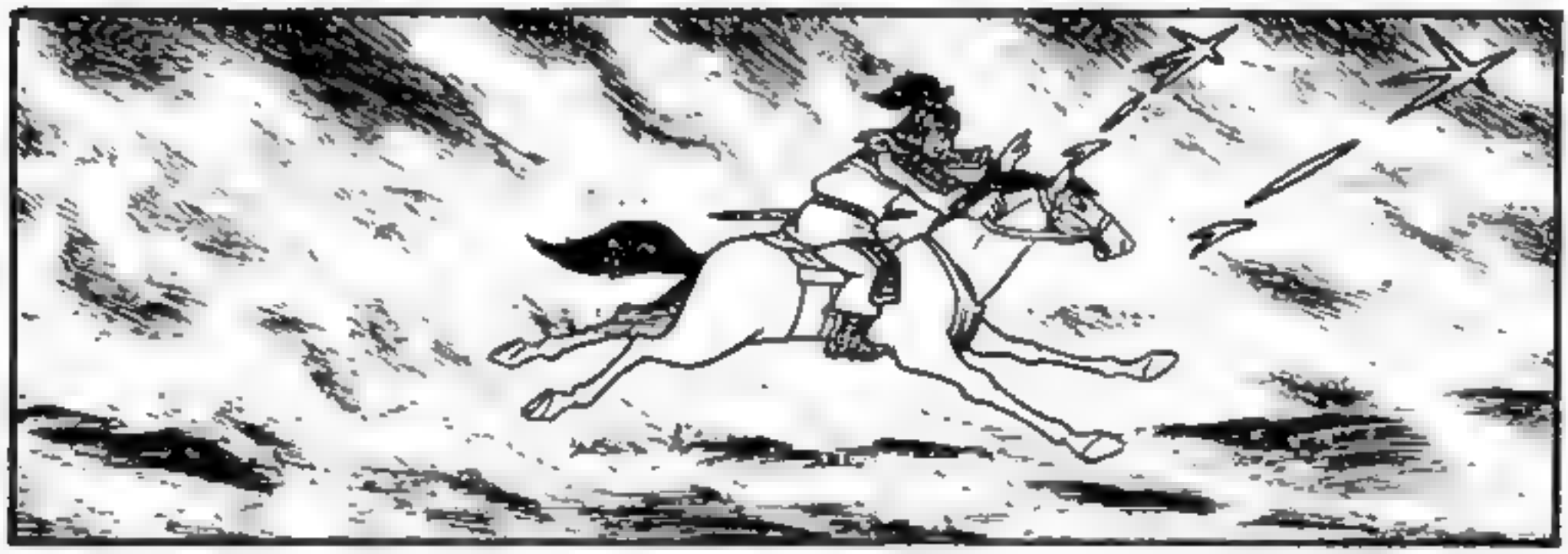
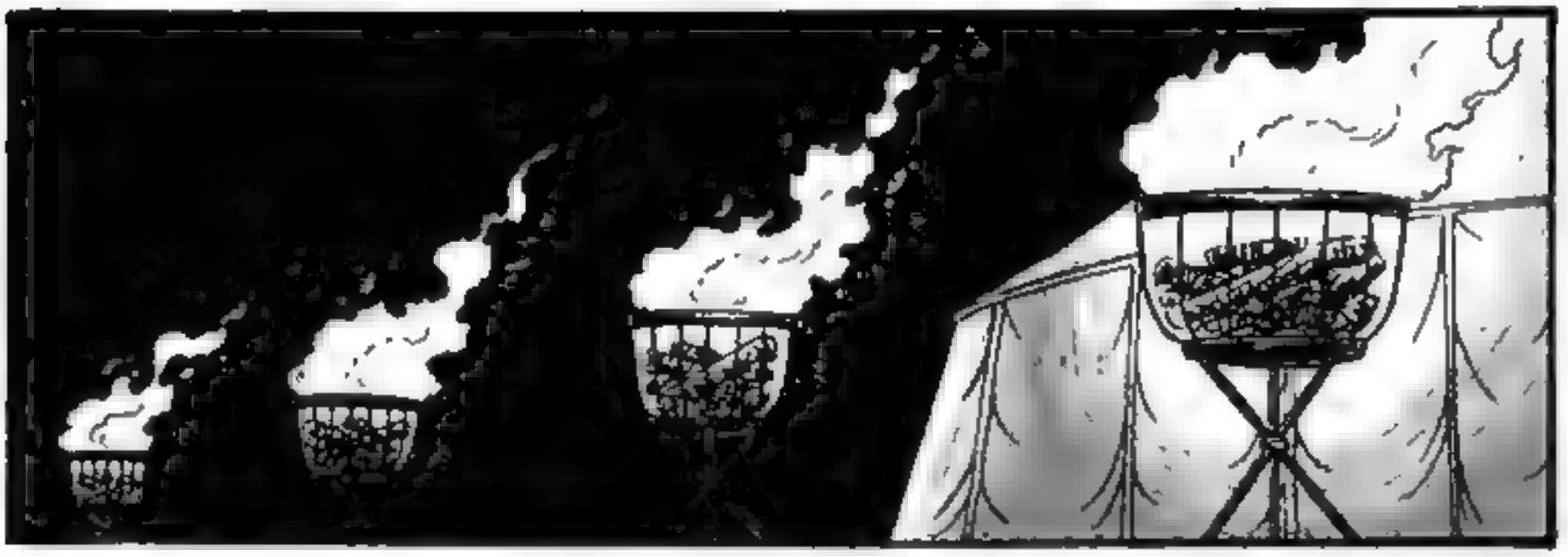
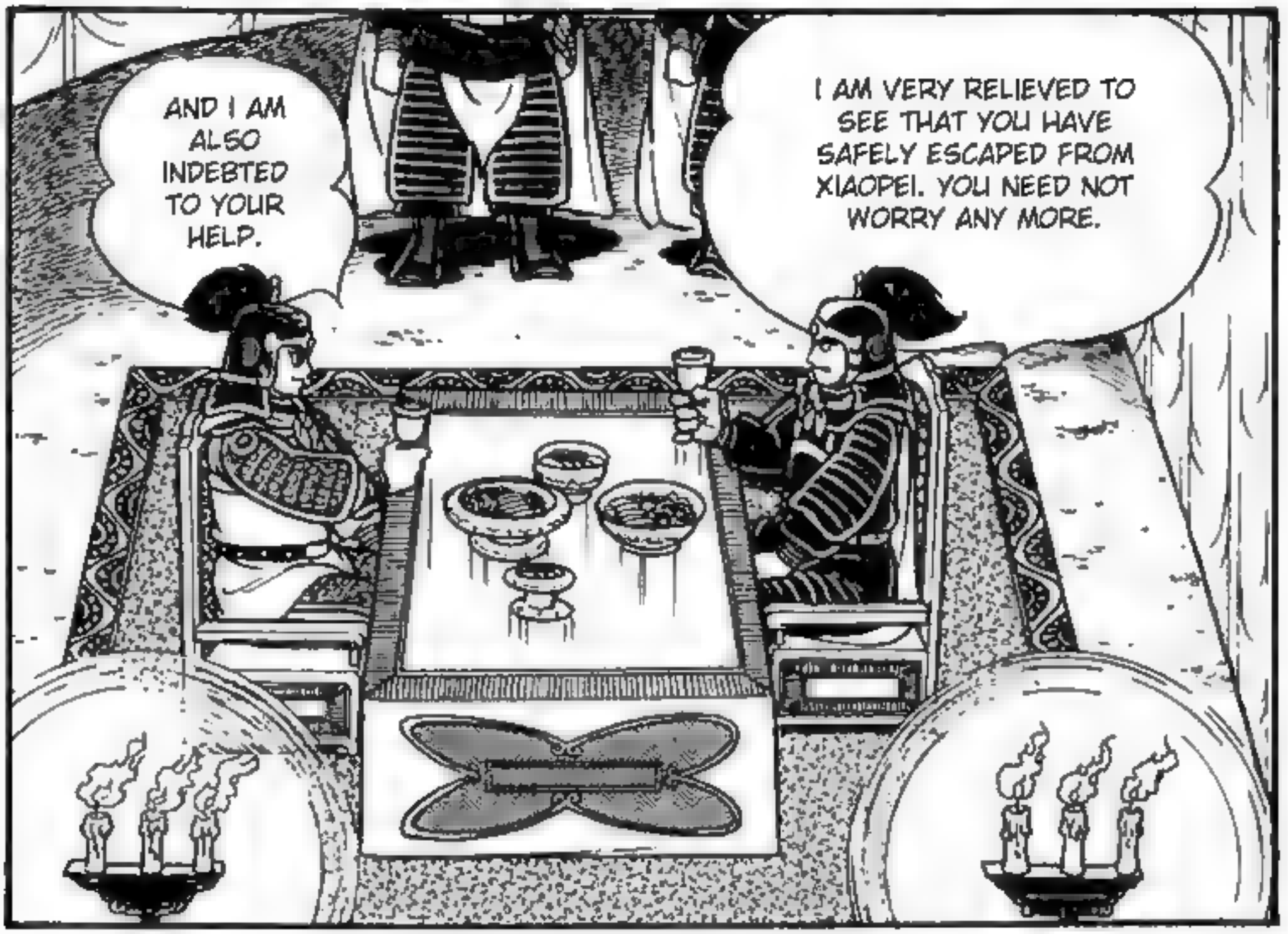


IT'S CAO CAO'S ARMY!






AND I AM ALSO INDEBTED TO YOUR HELP.
I AM VERY RELIEVED TO SEE THAT YOU HAVE SAFELY ESCAPED FROM XIAOPEI. YOU NEED NOT WORRY ANY MORE.

YES, SIR.
GUIDE LIU BEI TO HIS TENT.

YOU MUST BE QUITE TIRED FROM THE LONG JOURNEY. I SUGGEST YOU SLEEP EARLY TONIGHT.

THIS WAY, SIR.

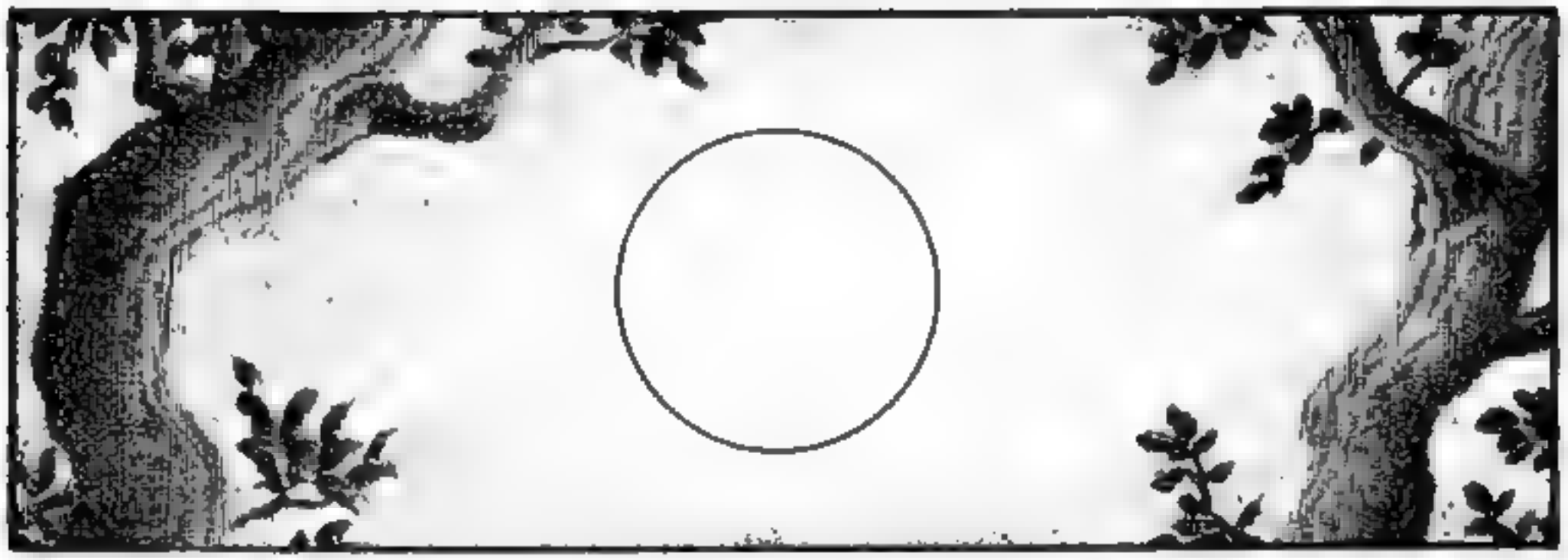
THANK YOU.

THIS IS SIR'S TENT. PLEASE HAVE A GOOD NIGHT'S REST.

IS SOME-THING THE MATTER?

YES...

I AM WONDERING WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BROTHERS GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI. I CAN ONLY PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY...



THE REST OF OUR ARMY HAS ARRIVED, GENERAL.

WHAT IS IT?
GENERAL XIAHOU DUN.

WHAT!

OHHH!

I MUST PROPERLY GREET OUR LORD.

GIVE ME MY ARMOUR!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN. BY THE WAY, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR EYE?
I HOPE THE LONG JOURNEY TO HERE HAS NOT AFFECTED MY LORD IN ANY WAY.
I'M VERY SORRY TO HEAR THAT BUT THANK THE HEAVENS THAT YOU MANAGED TO SURVIVE.
I LOST IT DURING A BATTLE DUE TO MY NEGLIGENCE...

IN AN EFFORT TO EXTEND HIS POWER OVER THE LANDS OF XUZHOU, HE HAS ALLIED HIMSELF WITH NUMEROUS MOUNTAIN BANDITS.

ANY NEW SIGNS FROM LU BU?

LET US FIRST TAKE BACK XIAOPEI FOR YOUR SAKE THEN, XUANDE.

HAHA. NO MATTER HOW MANY BANDITS HE MAY TRY TO GATHER, THEY ARE NOTHING BUT A PACK OF WORTHLESS STRAY DOGS.

ALL UNITS, MARCH ONWARDS!

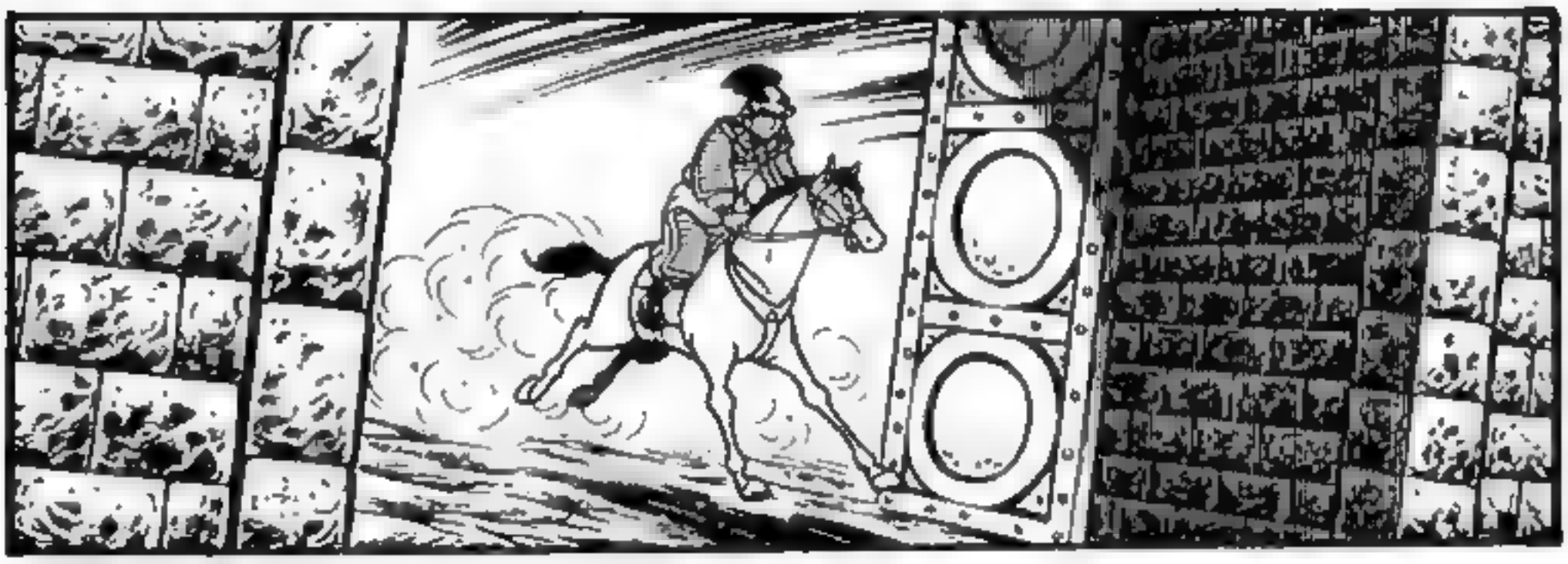
WHAT! CAO CAO'S MAIN ARMY HAS ARRIVED AND THEY ARE NOW HEADING TOWARDS XIAO PASS!?

AT MT. TAISHAN, WE HAVE 30,000 MOUNTAIN BANDITS LED BY SUN GUAN, WU DUN, YIN LI, AND CHANG XI, MY LORD.

HMM... THEN THAT MEANS THEY'LL NEED TO CROSS THE TAISHAN MOUNTAINS.

YES, SIR.

GOOD. SEND THEM AN ORDER TO DEFEAT THE COMING ENEMIES!

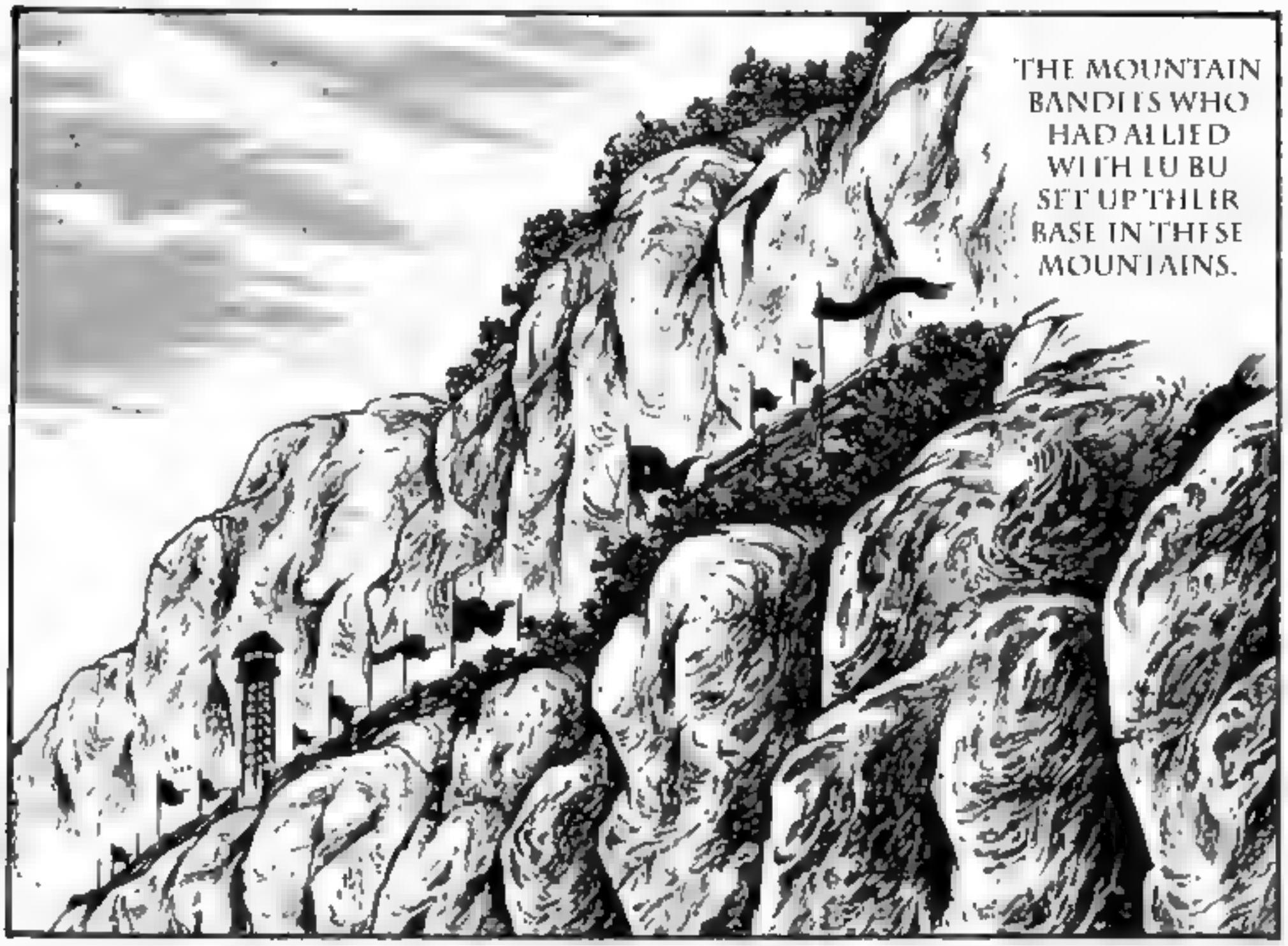


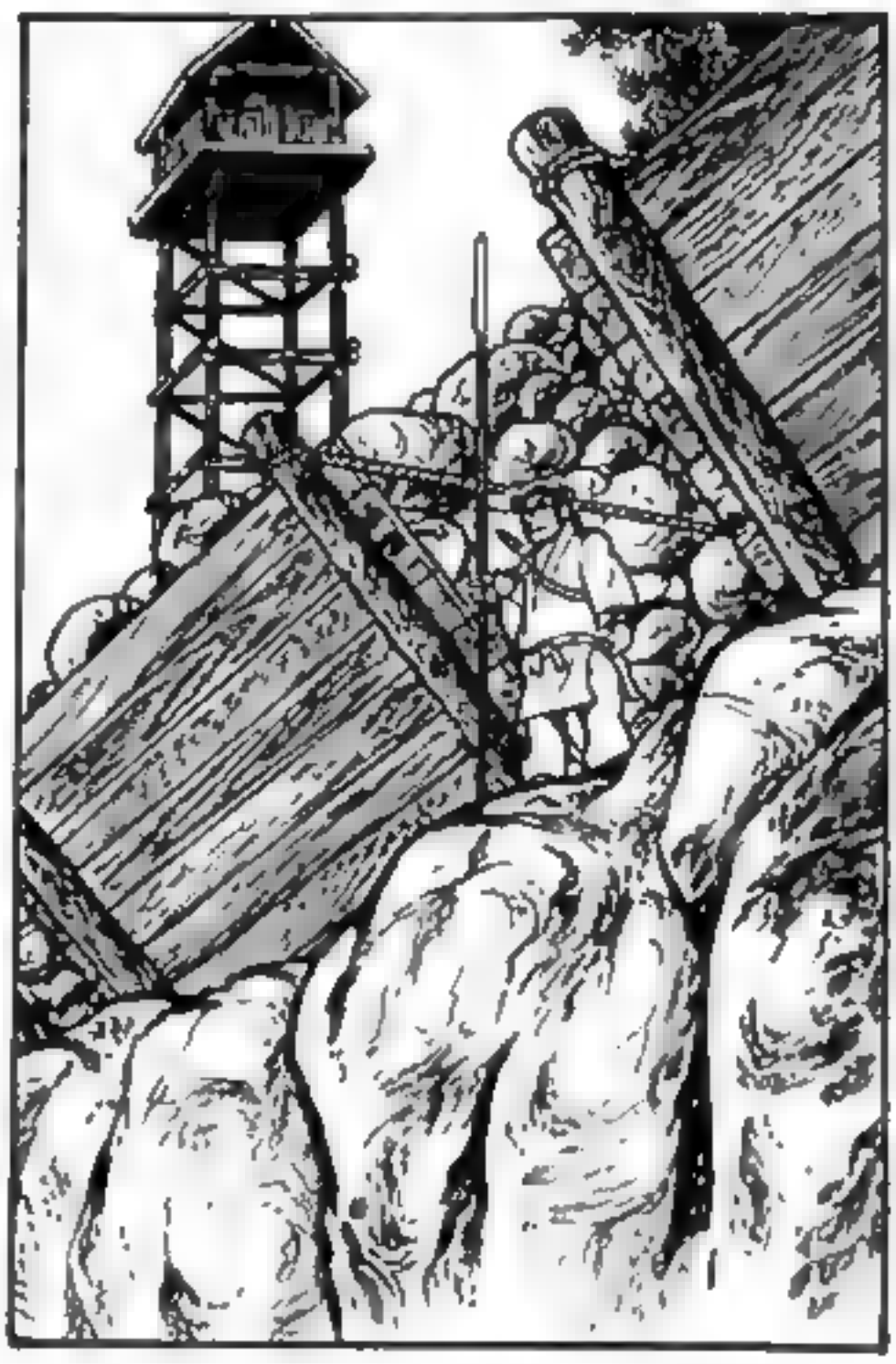
DOES MY LORD REALLY BELIEVE THIS MATTER CAN BE SAFELY ENTRUSTED TO MERE BANDITS?

CAO CAO'S FORCES WILL MOST DEFINITELY SUFFER HEAVY CASUALTIES.
HAHA. THE TAISHAN MOUNTAINS ARE THE PLAYGROUND OF THOSE FEARLESS BANDITS. THEY WILL HAVE THE UPPER HAND FROM UTILIZING THE TERRAIN'S ADVANTAGES.

30,000, HUH...
SIR, THAT IS MT. TAISHAN UP AHEAD. OUR REPORTS SAY THAT THE 30,000 MOUNTAIN BANDITS ARE AWAITING OUR FORCES FROM THERE.

MT TAISHAN
THESE MOUNTAINS MUST BE CROSSED IN ORDER FOR ONE TO COME TO XIAO PASS

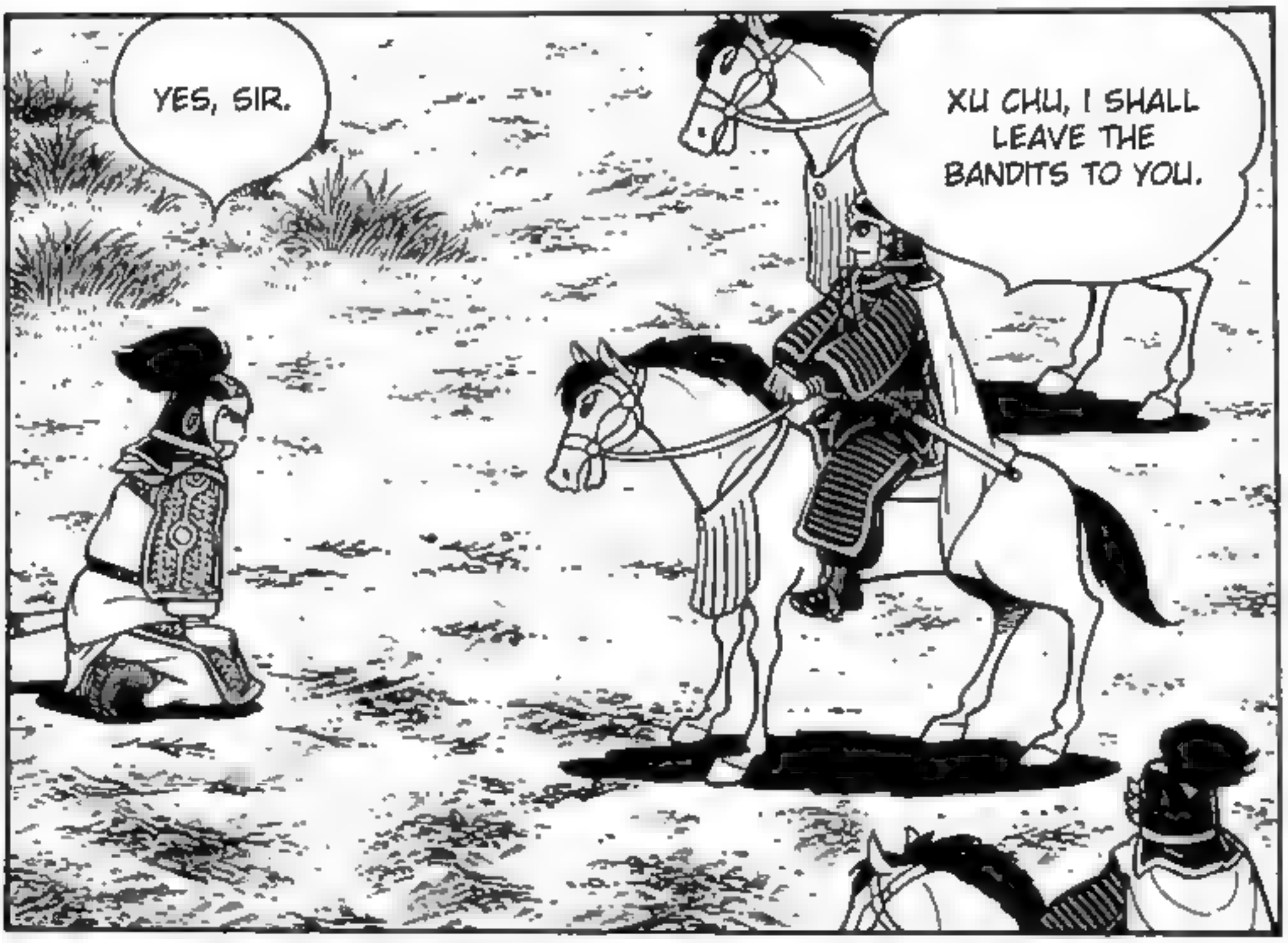

THE MOUNTAIN BANDITS WHO HAD ALLIED WITH LU BU SET UP THEIR BASE IN THESE MOUNTAINS.



THERE IS NO NEED FOR ANYTHING SPECIAL. A STRAIGHT-FORWARD ASSAULT WILL BE ENOUGH.
WHAT SHALL WE DO, SIR?

YES, MY LORD?

XU CHU!


YES, SIR.
XU CHU, I SHALL LEAVE THE BANDITS TO YOU.

SHOW THESE PATHETIC BANDITS WHO'VE ONLY FOUGHT INNOCENT PEASANTS WHAT IT MEANS TO GO UP AGAINST OUR ELITE FORCES!

YES, SIR. I SHALL NOT DISAPPOINT.

AS READERS MAY REMEMBER,

XU CHU

BACK WHEN REMNANTS OF THE YELLOW SCARVES WERE ROAMING ABOUT,

HE TOOK UP ARMS TO PROTECT HIS VILLAGE

WHEN HE CAUGHT THE REBEL LEADER,

HE FOUGHT WITH THE FAMOUS DIAN WEI OVER THE CAPTURED REBEL.

AND,

AFTER FIGHTING EVENLY WITH DIAN WEI, XU CHU CAUGHT CAO CAO'S ATTENTION, WHO MADE HIM HIS SUBORDINATE

AND IT WAS THIS VERY XU CHU WHO WAS NOW LEADING THE ATTACK

HEH HEH. AS IF WE'D LOSE TO SOME UPTIGHT GUYS FROM THE CAPITAL!

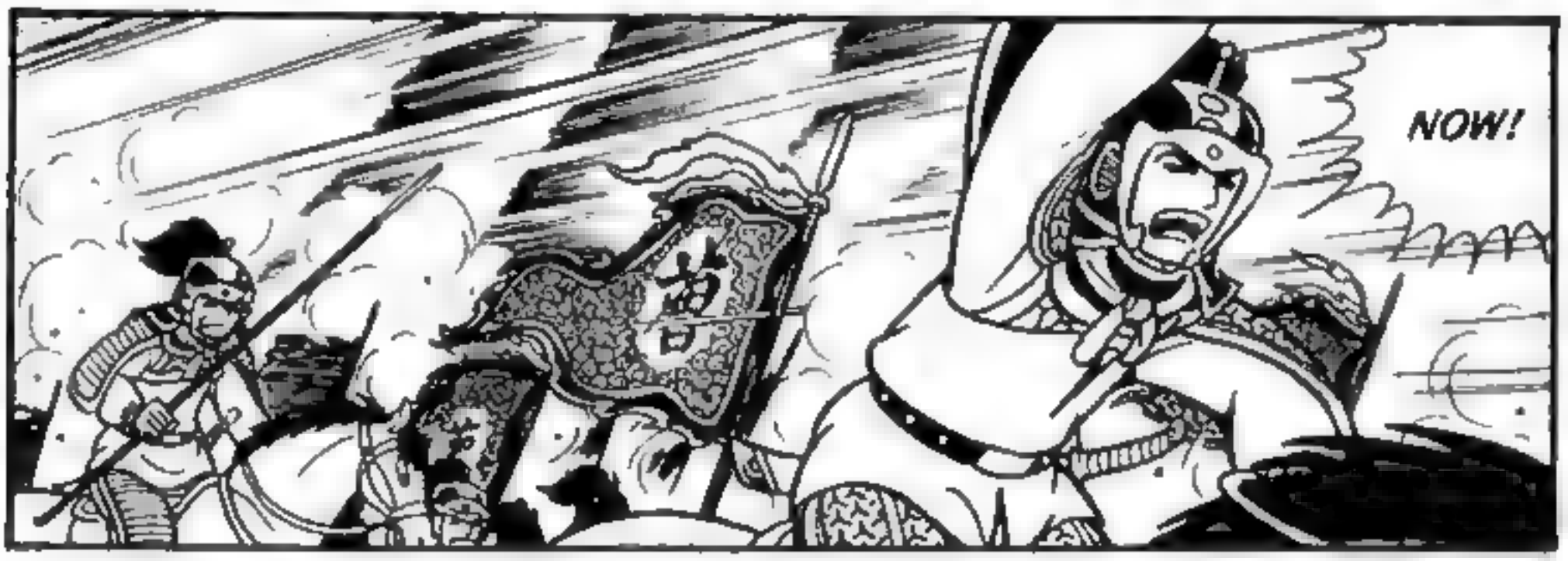
THEY'RE COMING.

WE'LL DROP THESE ROCKS DOWN BELOW WHEN THEY COME NEAR AND CRUSH THEM.

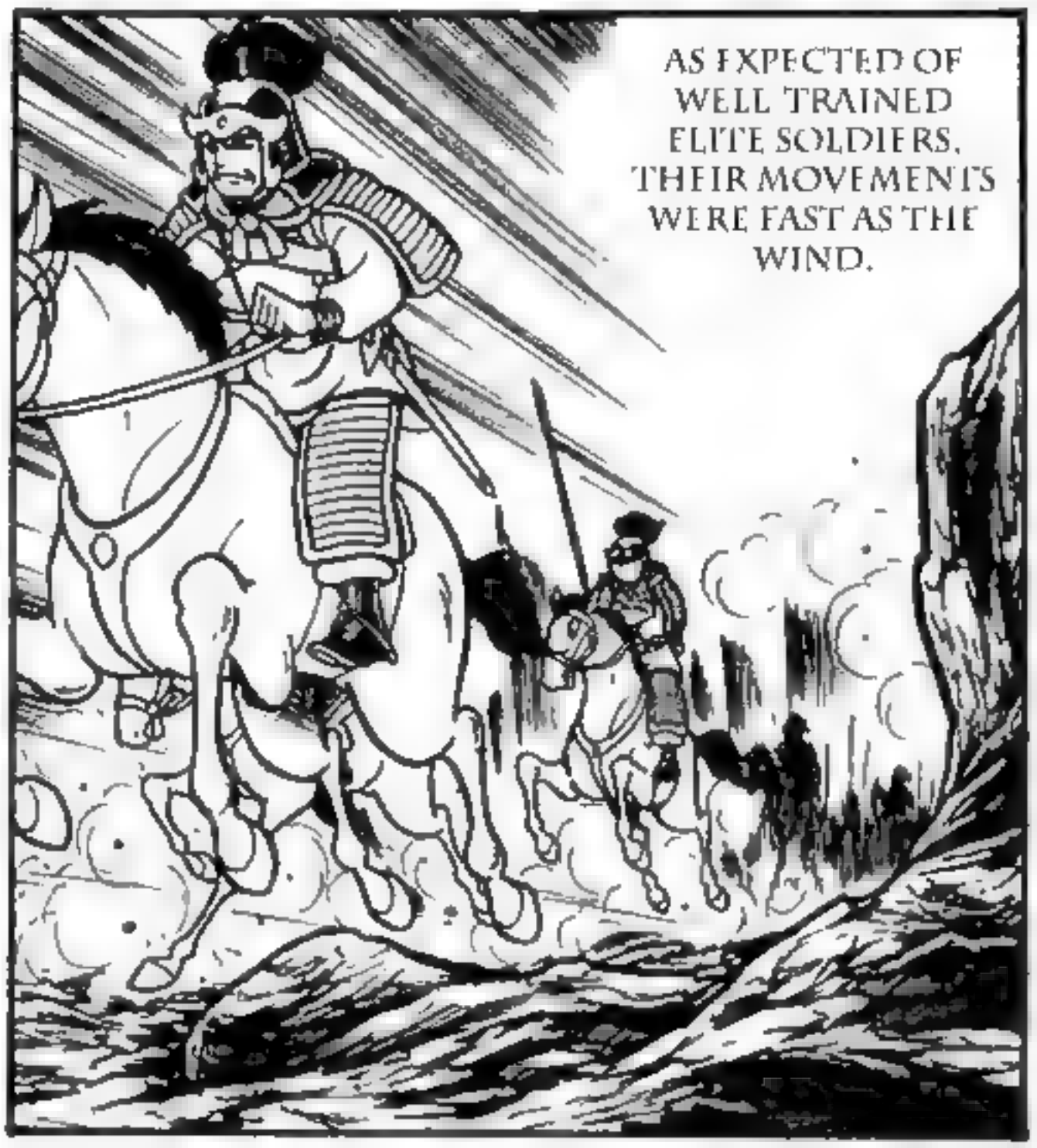
HALT!

LISTEN UP, MEN! WHEN I GIVE THE GO, WE'LL RUN THROUGH THIS NARROW PASS AS FAST AS POSSIBLE!

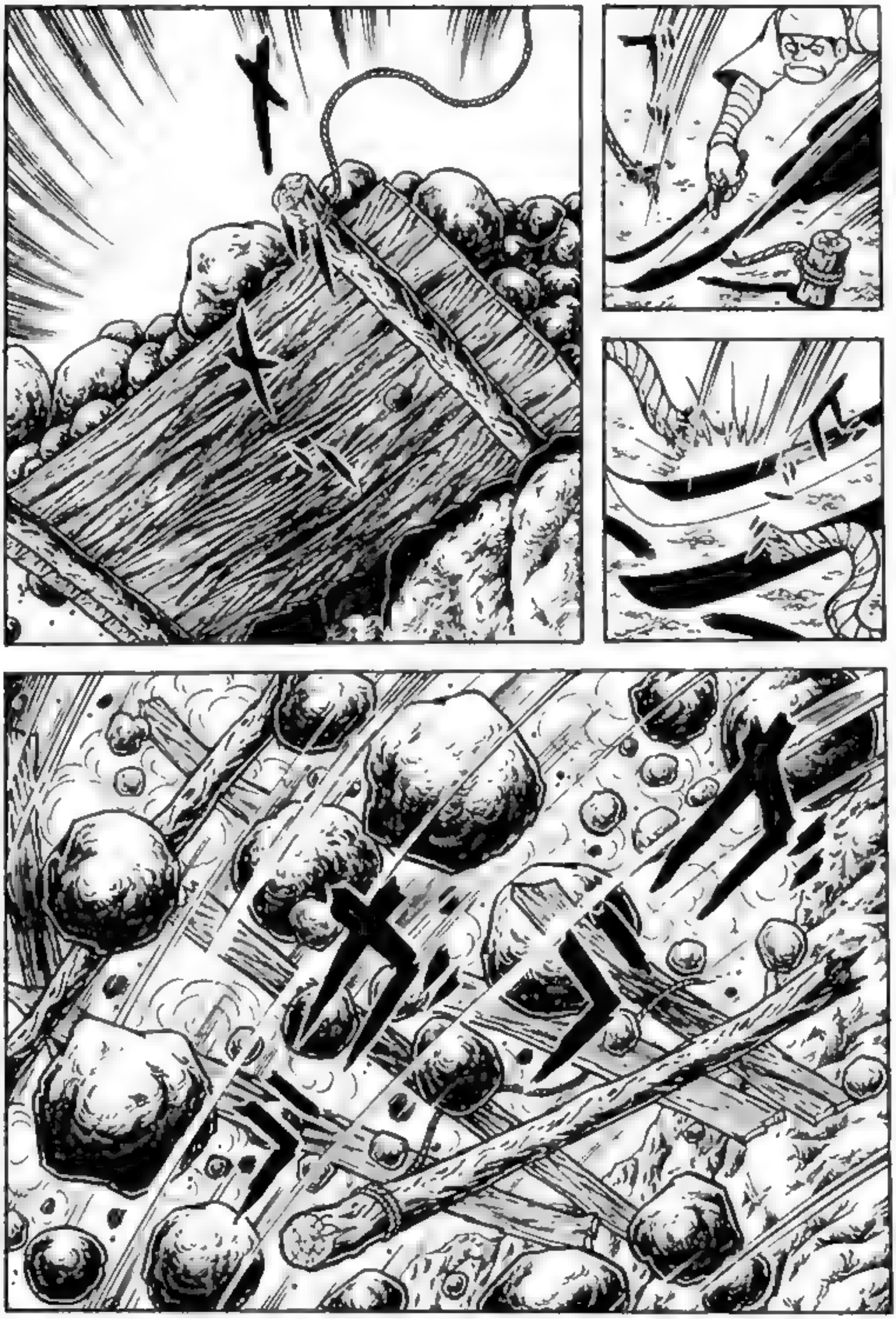
THESE NARROW SPOTS ARE OFTEN THE MOST DANGEROUS...


NOW!

AH!


AS EXPECTED OF WELL TRAINED ELITE SOLDIERS, THEIR MOVEMENTS WERE FAST AS THE WIND.

CUT THE ROPES!



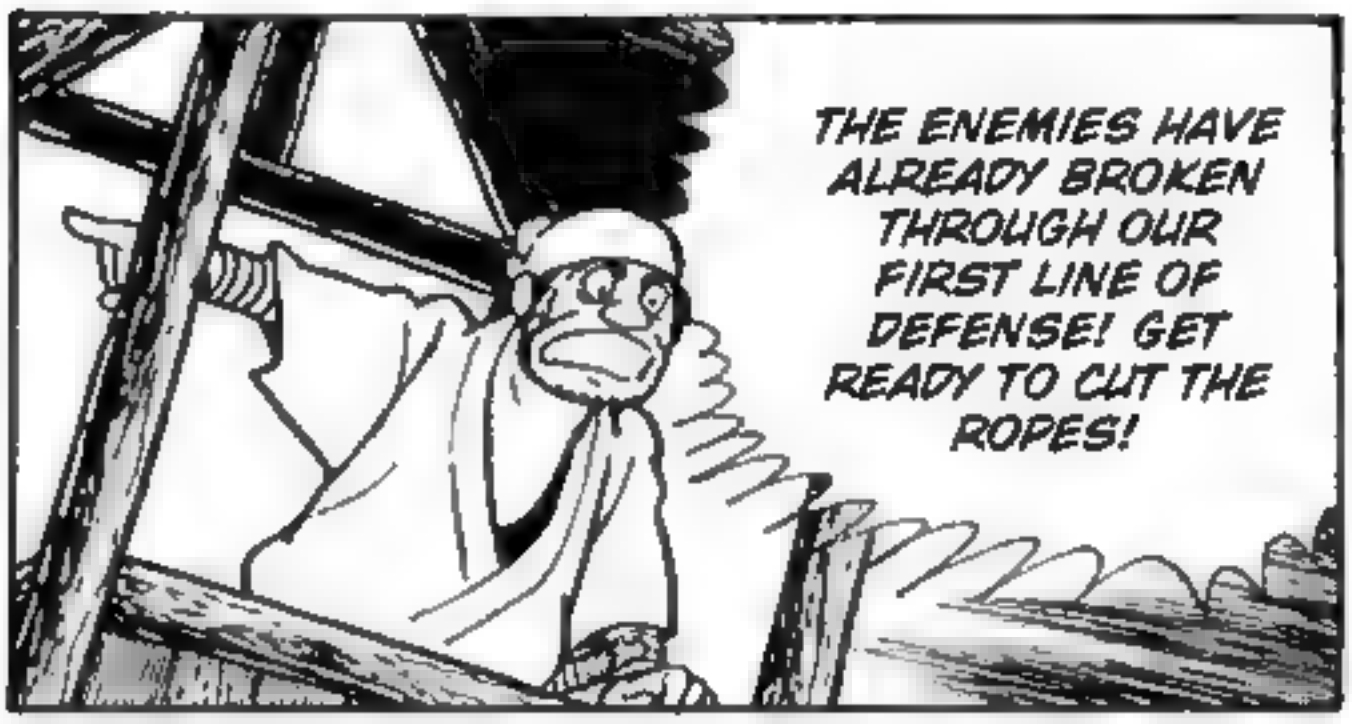
FASTER, MEN!

JUST AS I THOUGHT, THEY HAD A TRAP PREPARED...

GOT IT!
FIRE THE SIGNAL!

CUR-SES!

AH!

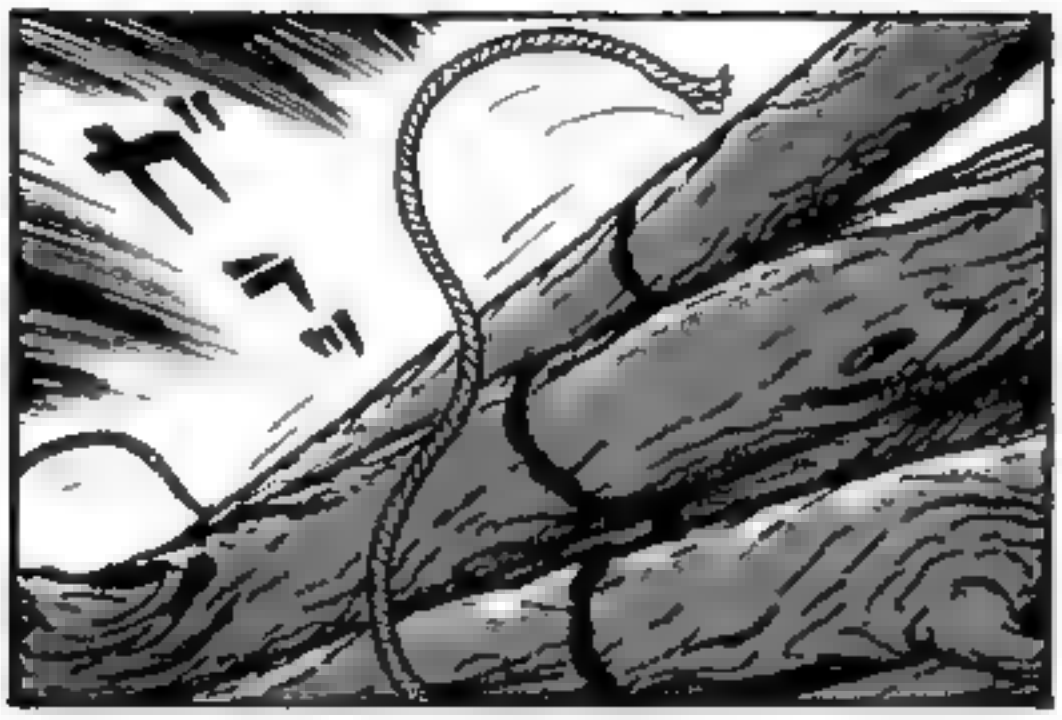

THE ENEMIES HAVE ALREADY BROKEN THROUGH OUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE! GET READY TO CUT THE ROPES!

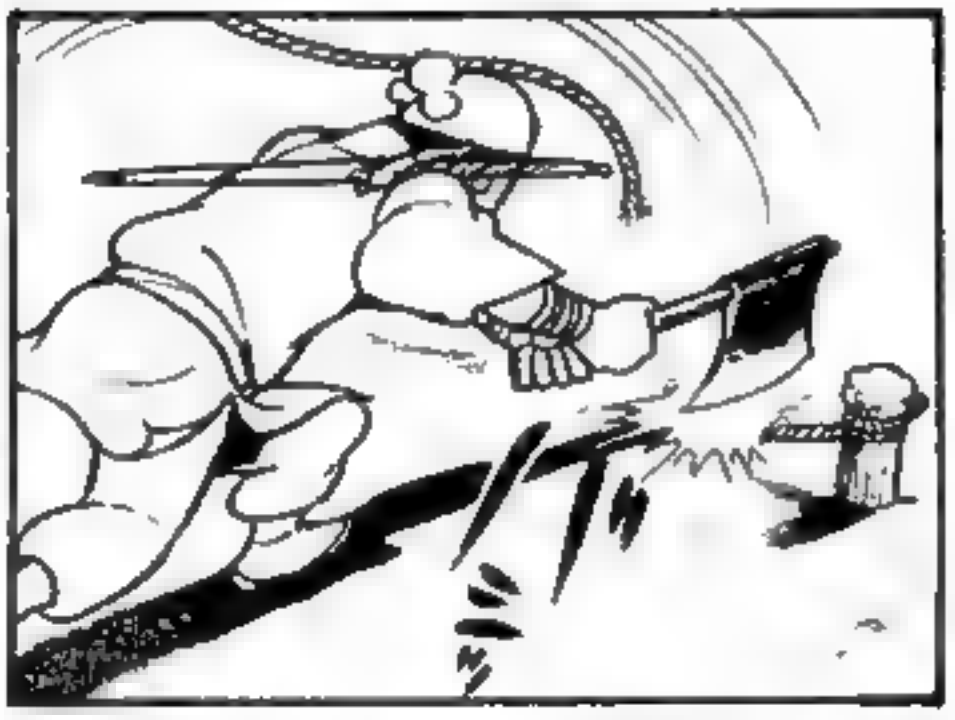
AHHHH!

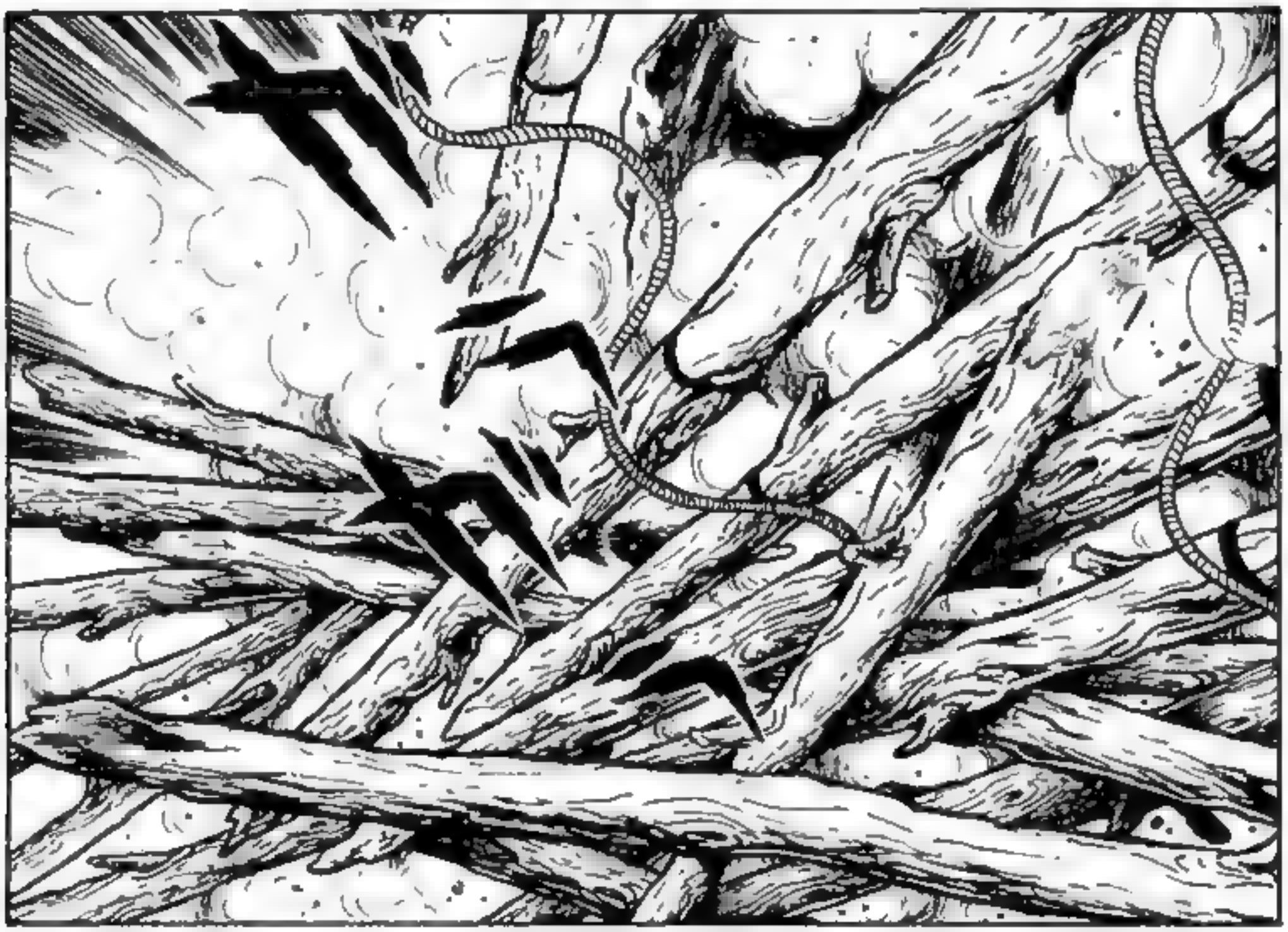
WHAT!

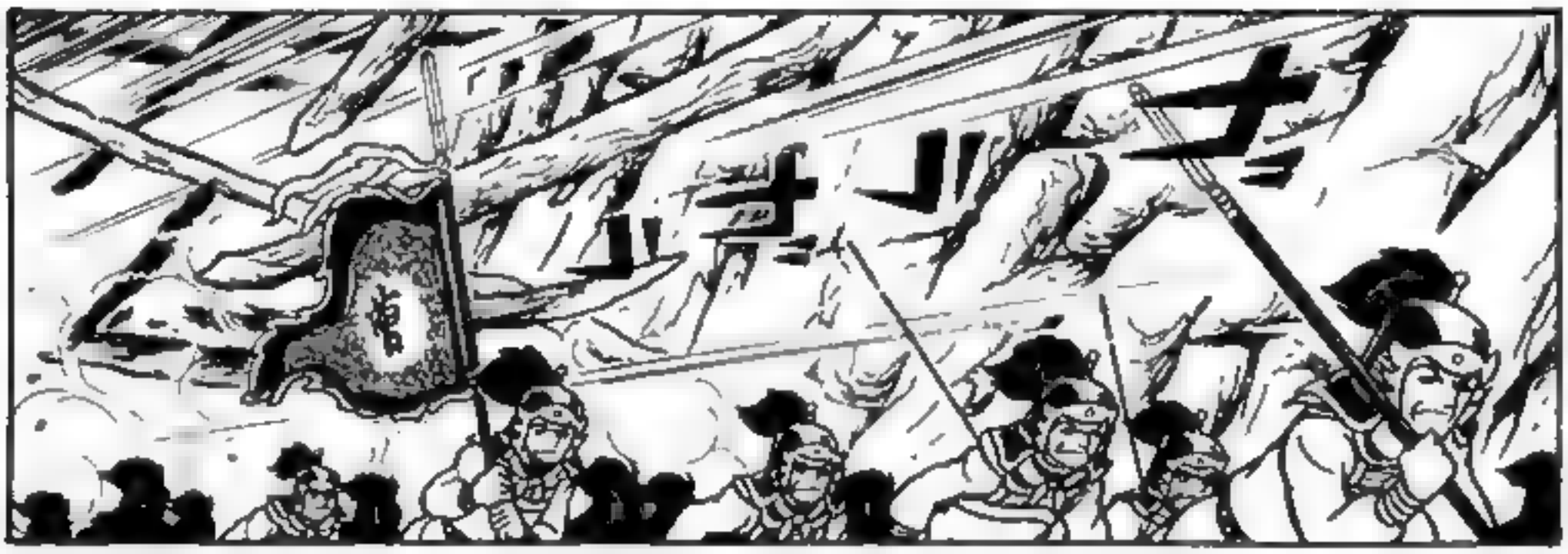
BOSS! THE ENEMIES ARE ALREADY RIGHT BELOW US!

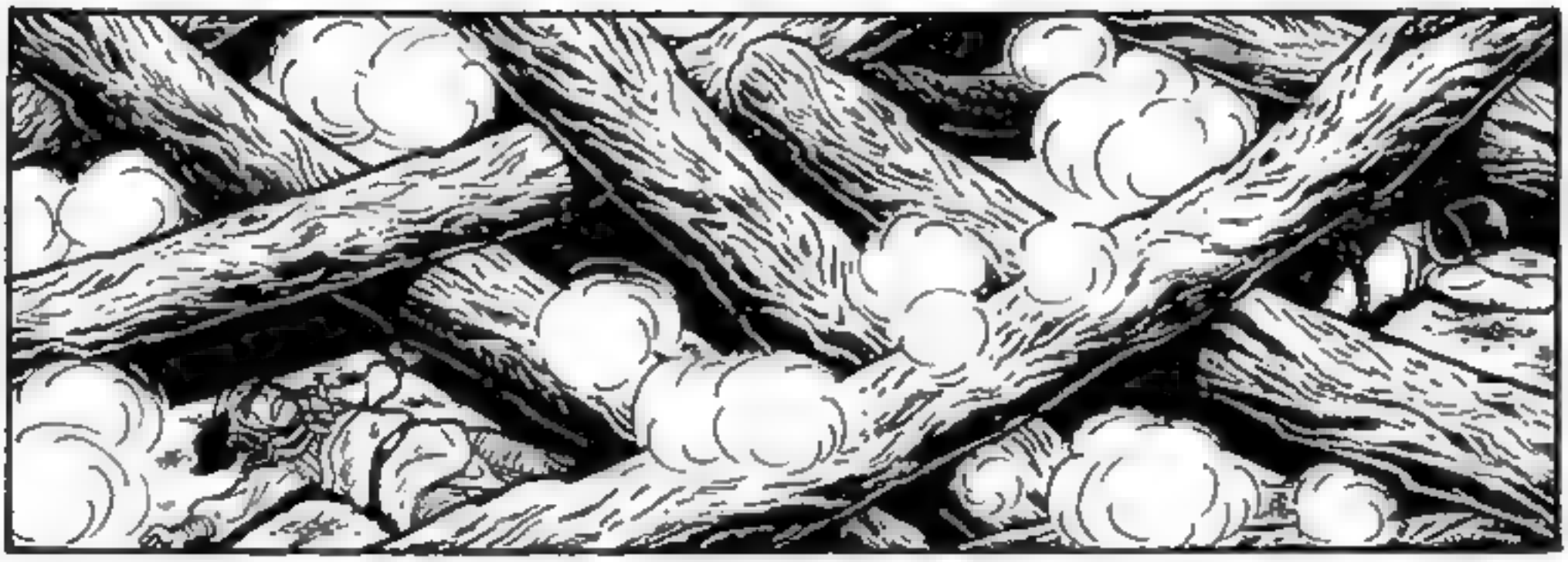
YOU FOOL! IF THEY'RE HERE, CUT THE ROPES ALREADY!

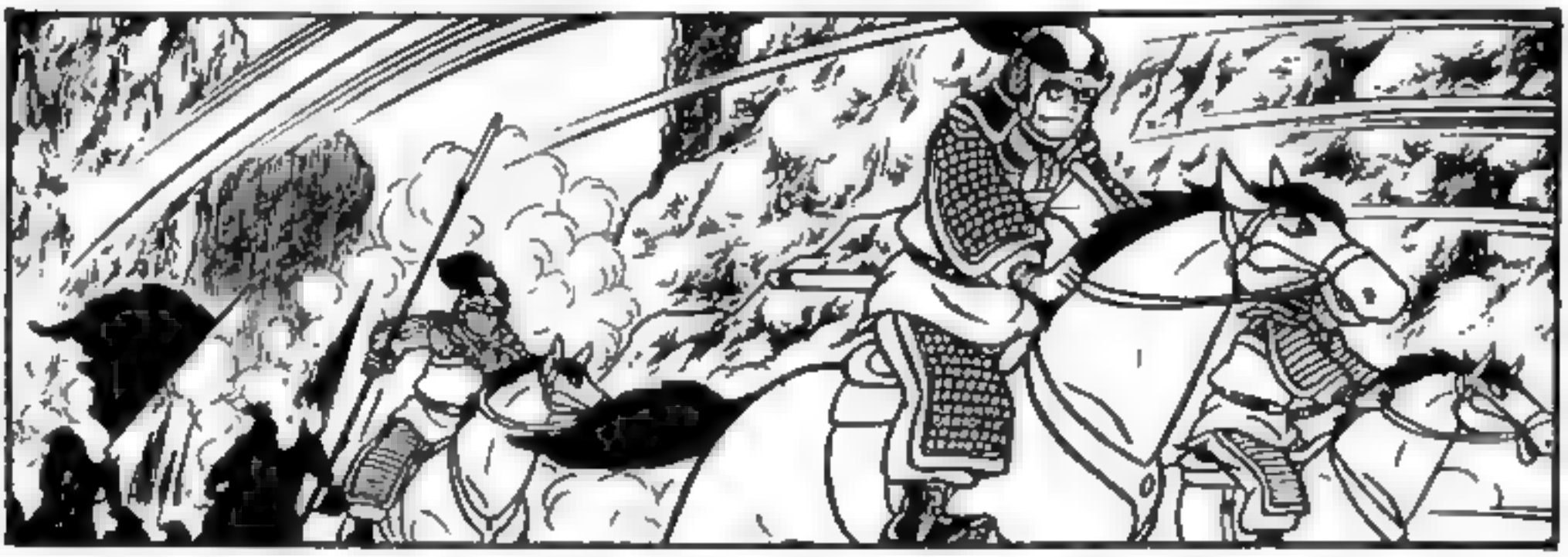












DAMN... THEY'VE CLEARED EVEN THAT...

MEN, PREPARE TO ENGAGE IN BATTLE!

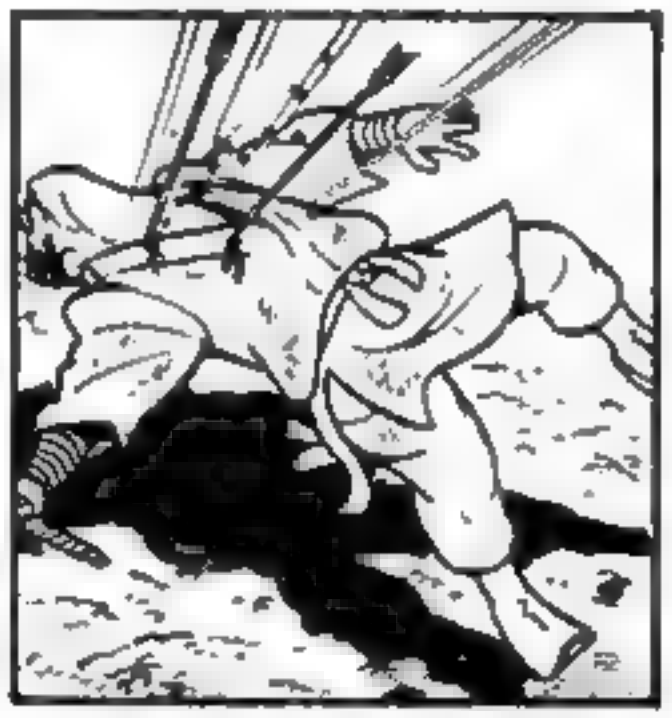
LET US SHOW THESE PATHETIC BANDITS THE MIGHT OF OUR ELITE FORCES!

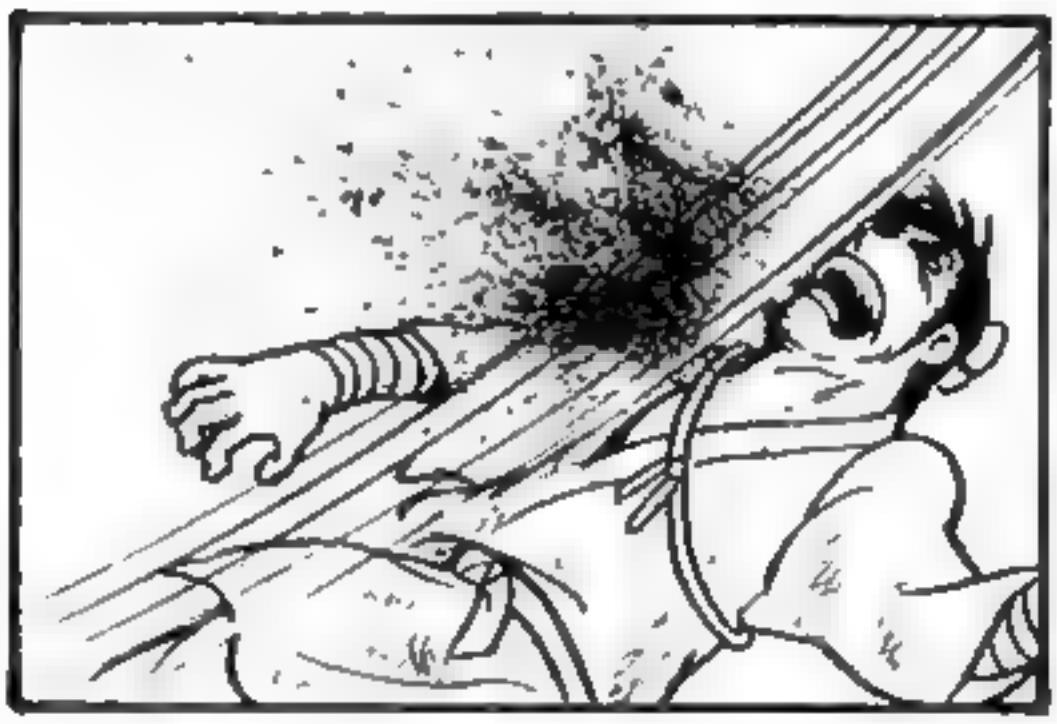
THEY'RE COMING OUT!

ARCHER UNIT 1, FIRE!

UNIT 2, FIRE!

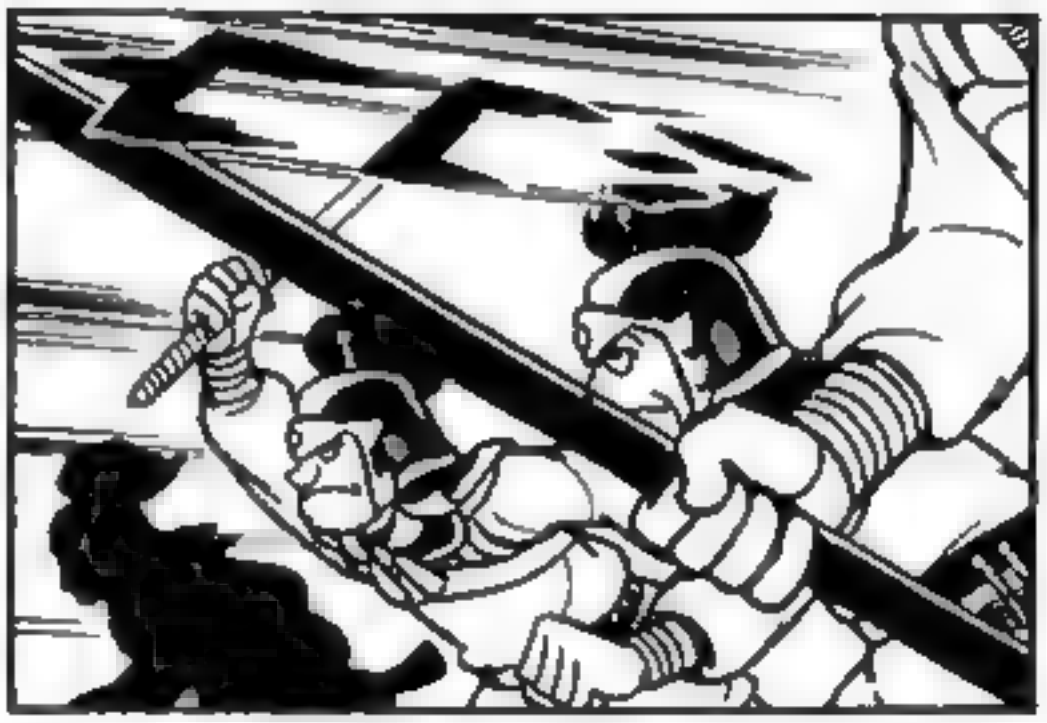
ALL UNITS, CHARGE!



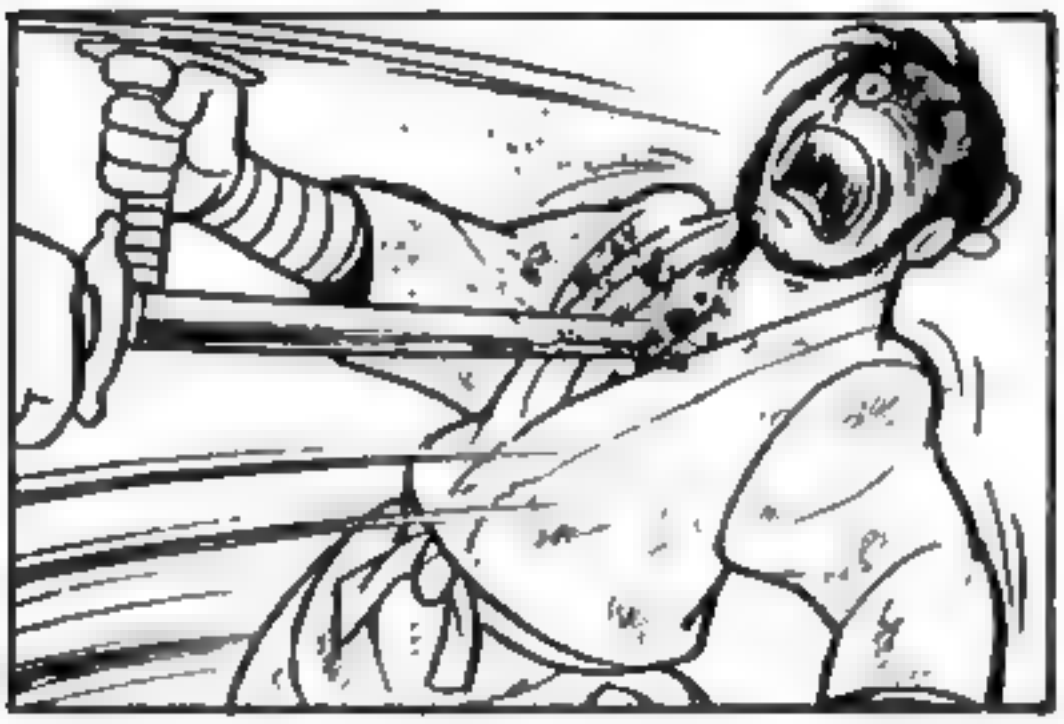


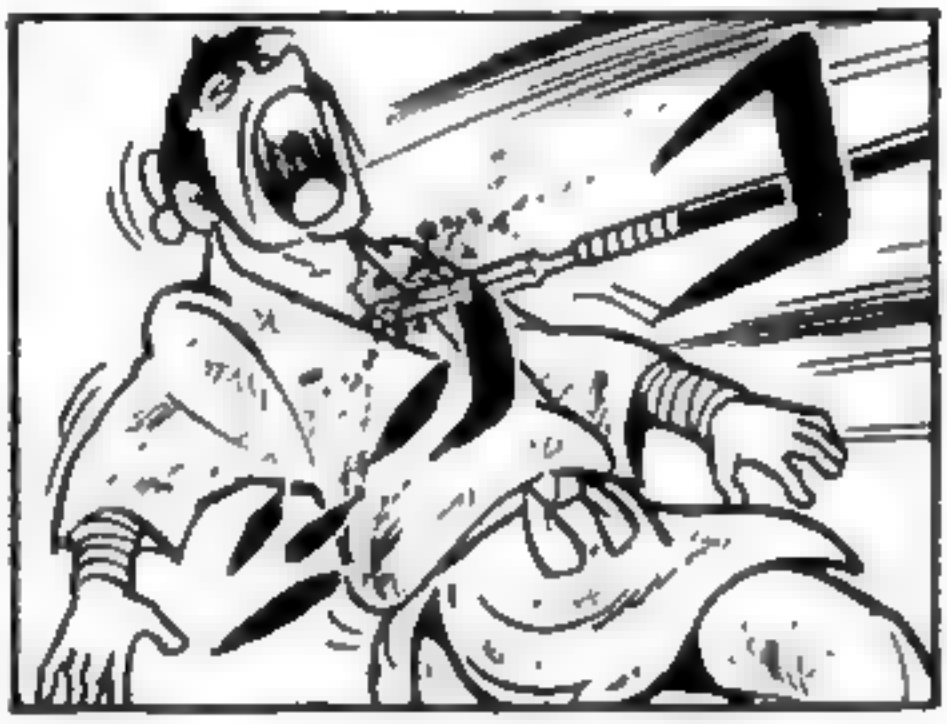
WE CAN'T MATCH THEM!
H-HE'S A MONSTER!

AGHH!



THE ENEMIES ARE IN PANIC! DON'T LET A SINGLE MAN ESCAPE!





YES, GENERAL.

GOOD. REPORT BACK TO OUR LORD THAT THE BANDITS HAVE BEEN ALL TAKEN CARE OF.

THE CHENS' SECRET PLOT

XIAOPEI IS THE THROAT OF XUZHOU! WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE IT!

MNN...

CHEN GUI, CHEN DENG. DO YOU HAVE ANY GOOD ADVICE?

I AGREE WITH MY FATHER. WE CANNOT JUST LEAVE THIS MATTER TO SOMEONE ELSE LIKE WE DID WITH MT. TAISHAN AND THE REBELS.

I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BEST FOR SIR TO DIRECTLY GO AND DEFEND XIAOPEI.

THEN IT IS DECIDED.

NOT ONLY THAT, THE MORALE OF OUR TROOPS SHALL INCRASE IF I GO.

YES, I AGREE...

I WANT ALL OTHER GENERALS TO COME WITH ME TO DEFEND XIAOPEI!

CHEN GUI! I WANT YOU TO REMAIN HERE AND LOOK AFTER XUZHOU CASTLE!

YES, THE DAY WE'VE BEEN LONGING FOR IS FINALLY NEAR.

FATHER, LU BU'S FINAL DAYS ARE NOW CLOSE AT HAND.

THOUGH I AM FORCED TO ACCOMPANY LU BU TO XIAOPEI, FATHER MUST NOT HAND OVER XUZHOU CASTLE BACK TO HIM WHEN HE RETURNS.

IF I DID SUCH A THING, THEY SHALL NOT STAY QUIET.

YES I WOULD LIKE TO, BUT I'M AFRAID THAT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE. AFTER ALL, LU BU'S FAMILY AND RELATIVES WILL BE HERE AS WELL.

GOOD.

ALRIGHT, I THINK I HAVE A GOOD PLAN TO TAKE CARE OF THEM, FATHER.

TRUE... WE MUST SOMEHOW SEND HIS FAMILY AWAY THEN.

WHERE COULD THEY HAVE GONE...?

HUH, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I CAN'T FIND HIS SON CHEN DENG ANYWHERE TOO.

HEY, WHERE DID CHEN GUI GO?

YES, TAKE CARE, MY SON.

I MUST QUICKLY MAKE MY LEAVE. FAREWELL, FATHER.

FORGIVE ME, SIR.

CHEN DENG! JUST WHAT WERE YOU TAKING SO LONG FOR!? DON'T YOU KNOW CAO CAO'S ARMY IS AT XIAOPEI'S DOORSTEPS!?

JUST WHY WOULD A MAN OF HIS CALIBRE WORRY ABOUT LOOKING AFTER A CASTLE?

I WAS BUSY DISCUSSING WITH MY FATHER ABOUT HIS CONCERNS OVER HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITY OF LOOKING AFTER XUZHOU.

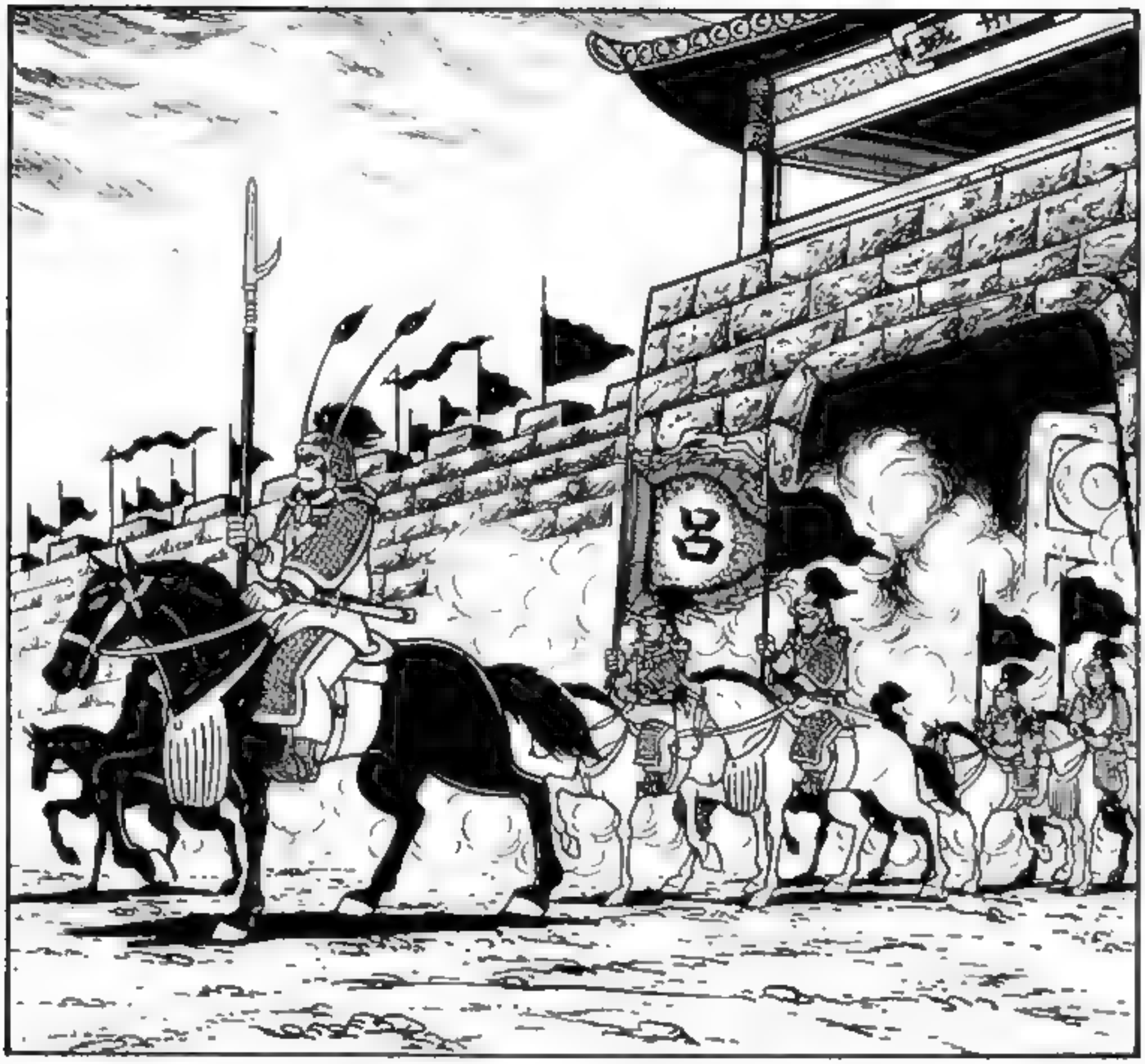
HMM, TRUE...

OUR PROVINCE OF XUZHOU IS CURRENTLY SURROUNDED BY CAO CAO'S FORCES ON ALL SIDES. MY FATHER IS WORRIED OVER WHAT TO DO WITH SIR'S FAMILY AND THE TREASURES STORED HERE IN CASE XUZHOU CASTLE IS FIERCELY ATTACKED BY A LARGE ENEMY FORCE.

ALRIGHT, TELL YOUR FATHER TO MOVE MY FAMILY AND THE TREASURES TO THE CASTLE OF XIAPI.

ALRIGHT, LET US MARCH TO XIAOPEI!

AN EXCELLENT IDEA, SIR.



HAHAHA, WHAT A FOOLISHLY NAIVE MAN YOU ARE, LU BU...

YES.

SIR, IT APPEARS TO BE ONE OF OUR MESSEN-GERS.

SIR! XIAO PASS IS ABOUT TO FALL TO CAO CAO'S ARMY! REINFORCEMENTS ARE NEEDED AT ONCE!

CAO CAO'S ARMY IS AS FAST AS EVER...

WHAT!

SIR, I WOULD ADVISE AGAINST GOING TO XIAO PASS SO SOON.

ALRIGHT, WE SHALL HEAD TO XIAO PASS AT ONCE THEN!

OUR SOLDIERS AT XIAO PASS ARE NOTHING BUT MERE BANDITS AND PEOPLE OF NO IMPORTANT ANCESTRY OR BACKGROUNDS.

WHAT? BUT THE MESSENGER JUST REPORTED THAT IT WOULD FALL INTO CAO CAO'S HAND AT ANY MOMENT!

WE MUST FIRST CONFIRM THE SITUATION BEFORE ACTING, SIR.

THEY ARE NOT THE MOST LOYAL PEOPLE AND MAY VERY WELL EVEN SWITCH SIDES IF THEY CAN BENEFIT BY DOING SO.

PLEASE ALLOW ME TO GO IN ADVANCE AND CONFIRM THE SITUATION, SIR.

I SEE...

I SHALL BE BACK SOON, SIR.

NOW MAKE HASTE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ADVICE. YOU ARE TRULY A MOST LOYAL SUBORDI-NATE OF MINE.

OPEN THE GATES!

WHO IS IT!?

OPEN THE GATES!

I WISH TO MEET WITH THE COM-MANDER IN CHARGE HERE!

I AM CHEN DENG FROM XUZHOU CASTLE!

GOOD EVENING, SIRS. I AM CHEN DENG.

AND I AM THE ZANG BA, THE SECOND IN COMMAND.

I AM CHEN GONG, THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF HERE!

HMM?

?

HAVE YOU SIRS DONE ANYTHING TO CATCH THE SUSPICION OF OUR LORD?

BUT THEN WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO XIAO PASS AND OUR FORCES HERE!?

W-WHAT!?

OUR LORD, LU BU, IS HESITANT IN SENDING REINFORCEMENTS TO XIAO PASS.

BUT I HAVE COME TO REPORT THAT REINFORCEMENTS SHALL NOT BE SENT.

I DO NOT KNOW...

JUST WHY DOES OUR LORD DOUBT US SO?

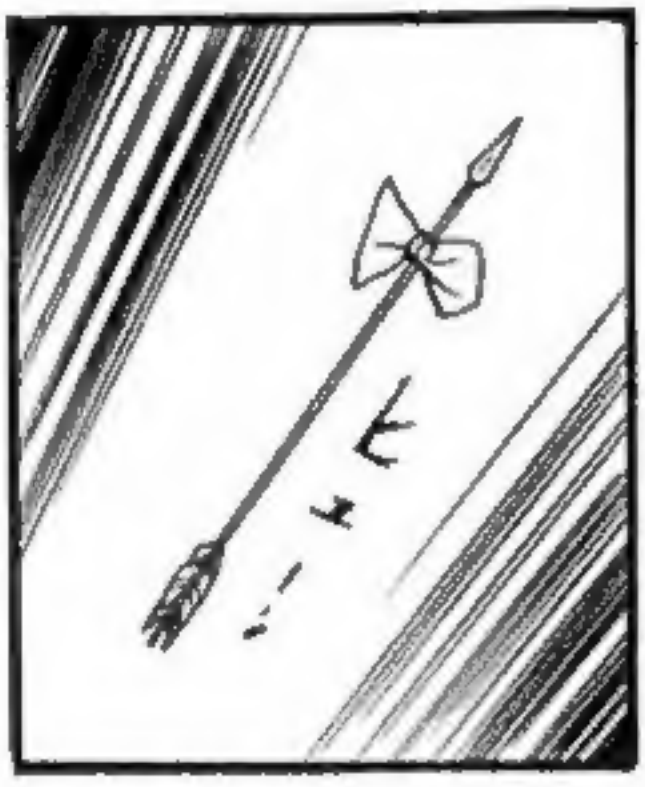
CAO CAO'S FORCES OUTNUMBER US GREATLY! WITHOUT ANY REINFORCE-MENTS, WE'LL SURELY BE DEFEATED SOON!

T-THAT'S RIDICULOUS! JUST HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO HOLD THE ENEMIES OFF THEN!?

CHEN DENG, OUR LORD HOLDS YOU IN HIGH REGARD THESE DAYS. PLEASE EXPLAIN OUR GRAVE SITUATION TO THE LORD!

I AM MERELY A MESSENGER AND SO I'M AFRAID I CANNOT ANSWER YOUR COMPLAINTS.

ALRIGHT, I'LL TRY MY BEST TO CONVINCE HIM THEN.



YES, SIR. I BELIEVE THEY WERE WAITING FOR MY LORD TO ARRIVE SO THEY COULD AMBUSH AND CAPTURE SIR.

WHAT!? CHEN GONG AND ZANG BA REALLY SEEM TO BE PLANNING ON BETRAYING ME!?

IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN I HAVE A PLAN OF MY OWN...

DAMN THOSE TRAITORS ...!

AND WHEN THEY'RE DEEP ASLEEP, SHOOT A FLAMING ARROW AS A SIGNAL AND OPEN ONE OF THE GATES.

I WANT YOU TO MAKE THEM DRINK AND LOWER THEIR GUARD DOWN FOR ONE NIGHT.

CHEN DENG, I WANT YOU TO GO TO XIAO PASS ONE MORE TIME!

UNDERSTOOD, MY LORD.

AND THEN I SHALL CHARGE IN AND KILL THOSE TRAITORS...!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

HAHA...

TRANSLATED BY HOX